

STARS AND STRIPES®

**Bonds wins
record 7th
NL MVP**

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San Francisco's
Bryant Bonds



**More TV decoders
for off-base rental
in Japan on way**

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**Heche works her
way back to
sanity, stardom**

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Actress Anne Heche

Volume 63, No. 214 © EPSS 2004 J

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2004

50¢

Powell, three others resign from Cabinet

Secretary of State to stay until successor named Page 8

Wounds don't stop walk down the aisle

Severely injured in Iraq,
Spc. Aaron Bugg gains a partner
in his recovery when he marries his
childhood sweetheart in a rare ceremony
at Walter Reed Army Medical Center

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Army Spc. Aaron Bugg, 20, right, and Lisa McCroskey, 21, are married in a ceremony in the stone chapel at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Bugg, of the 25th Infantry Division out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, had both legs severely damaged in Iraq when a bomb exploded near the Humvee in which he was riding six weeks ago. While 15 to 20 couples tie the knot at the stone chapel each year, Bugg's is the first wedding involving someone wounded in a war zone since 1993, Walter Reed spokesman Bill Swisher said.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Blake murder trial: Defense attorneys for Robert Blake are looking for jurors who may be open to conspiracy theories.

Prosecutors, on the other hand, want people who use common sense and make quick decisions.

More than three years after Blake's wife was shot to death outside a San Fernando Valley, Calif., restaurant, the selection process for more than 100 potential jurors was to begin Monday in the actor's murder trial.

Blake, former star of the "Baretta" TV series, is charged with murder in the death of his wife, Bonny Lee Bakley, whom he married after DNA tests showed he was the father of her baby.

New N.J. governor sworn in: New Jersey Gov. James E. McGreevey submitted his letter of resignation Monday, ending a tenure doomed by a shocking summertime disclosure he had engaged in a gay, extramarital affair.

The letter, signed by McGreevey, was filed with Secretary of State Regina Thomas. It says, "Dear Madam Secretary, I resign effective 11:59 p.m. on Monday, November 15, 2004."

On Sunday, state Senate President Richard Codey took the oath of office as acting governor in a private ceremony at his home. He takes over once McGreevey has officially left the job at midnight.

New bishop elected: A bishop whose diocese plans to seek bankruptcy protection from millions of dollars in clergy sex abuse claims was elected in Washington on Monday as the next president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Bishop William Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., was elected overwhelmingly to succeed Bishop William Gregory of Belleville, Ill., who is ending his three-year term after leading the conference through the height of the clergy sex abuse crisis.

Advocates for abuse victims had opposed the Skylstad's candidacy, saying he was trying to avoid responsibility for mishandling priests who molested young people.

CIA shake-up: Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., on Sunday supported CIA Director Porter Goss's shake-up of the intelligence agency, which he described as "dysfunctional" and not providing President Bush with the information needed to conduct the war on terrorism.

Reacting to stories about potential resignations of CIA officials in response to questions taken by Goss and his staff, McCain, appearing on ABC's "This Week With



Turkey marks anniversary of attacks:

Nermin Sahin, center, whose son was killed following a suicide attack last year at an Istanbul synagogue, lays flowers Monday at the scene of the blast in Istanbul. Turkish Jews and Muslims cried in the rain and recited prayers of mourning as they marked the first anniversary of suicide bombings that struck two Istanbul synagogues in attacks blamed on a local al-Qaida cell.

George Stephanopoulos said, "A shake-up is absolutely necessary."

Human smuggling plea: A woman pleaded guilty Monday to her role in a human smuggling operation in which 19 illegal immigrants died after boarding a sweltering trailer.

Norma Gonzalez Sanchez was set to go to trial on Nov. 29 with three other defendants who prosecutors say were involved in the smuggling operation.

She pleaded guilty to a charge of harboring and transporting illegal immigrants into the United States and causing serious injury or death to a person as a result.

World

Iraq elections: Along with their monthly ration of sugar, rice and flour, Iraqis are receiving a piece of paper promoted as a key to a democratic Iraq: a voter registration sheet.

Iraqis will choose a national assembly, which among other things will draft a permanent constitution. If the document is ratified in a referendum, another election will be held in December 2005.

Voter registration runs through Dec. 15, with authorities using a Saddam Hussein-era database for food rationing to cre-

ate the initial voter list. When Iraqis receive their monthly ration, they get a sheet of paper listing members of each family.

Dollar value in Cuba: The value of a dollar in Cuba dropped to 90 cents on Monday as a surcharge on the American greenback took effect, the latest step in the island nation's conversion from an economy based on U.S. currency to one using the new convertible peso.

Cubans and tourists lined up to change dollars into pesos over the weekend. As of last week, U.S. currency no longer was accepted at Cuban stores, restaurants, hotels or other businesses, and the new 10 percent surcharge is meant to further discourage people from bringing currency from Cuba's No. 1 enemy to the island.

President Fidel Castro has said the widespread use of the American money was being halted to guarantee Cuba's economic independence.

U.N. hostages in Afghanistan: Taliban-linked militants threatening to kill three U.N. hostages gave the government until Monday night to reach a deal for their release, while Afghan officials said negotiations had been postponed amid disagreements over ransom demands.

Philippine diplomat Angelito Nayan, British-Irish Annetta Flanagan, and Shupie Heibbi of Kosovo, were seized at gunpoint on Oct. 28 — the first abduction of foreigners in the capital since the fall of the Taliban three years ago.

The reported leader of Jaish-ul-Muslimeen, which is seeking the release of 26 militants in exchange for the trio, told The Associated Press that the new deadline for an agreement was 10 p.m. Monday.

Japan-North Korea talks: Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said Monday he would not insist on the outcome of North Korea's investigation into the fate of several Japanese nationals abducted decades ago by the communist country's spies.

He said Tokyo has not ruled out the possibility of economic sanctions.

Pyeongyang has admitted to kidnapping 13 Japanese in the 1970s and 1980s to train North Koreans in Japanese language and culture. The regime released five in 2002 but has said the eight others died — a claim many Japanese don't believe.

Japanese officials returned Monday on a chartered flight from North Korea with what Pyongyang says are the remains of a woman kidnapped 26 years ago, according to media reports. They also carried the documents and possessions of seven other Japanese citizens.

Stories and photo from wire services

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TV decoders on the way for 2 Japan bases

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — For off-base Japan residents tired of watching television in a foreign language, the wait for American shows such as "CSI" and "Survivor" is almost over.

A satellite decoder, a security device that customers lease monthly from their base exchange to access American Forces Network channels in their off-base homes, is on back order at two U.S. air bases on mainland Japan.

But Army and Air Force Exchange officials said this week stocks should be replenished by the end of this month.

The biggest shortage is at Misawa Air Base in northern Japan, where as of last week, more than 70 people awaited a decoder, said Mike Patmon, sales and merchandise manager for Misawa AAFES.

The decoders are also out of stock at Yokota Air Base near Tokyo, but just 17 people were on the waiting list last week, said Yokota AAFES general manager Flisia Bailey.

AAFES spokeswoman Army Sgt. 1st Class Amanda Glenn, based at the company's Pacific headquarters on Okinawa, said Monday there was "a slight delay" in getting decoders to Japan for two reasons: "We did switch models of the decoder for Japan and Okinawa and we also switched our warehouse."

Decoders previously were stored at a Japan warehouse but now come from a distribution center near Oakland, Calif., officials said.

More than 70 people waiting for devices at Misawa; 17 at Yokota

See Page 11 for more local stories

"There was a slight delay in getting them because we had a new model," Glenn said. "They weren't readily available."

More decoders are on order and should arrive in mainland Japan stores by the end of November, she added. "They are available now. Any delay was a slight delay."

Patmon said Misawa's base exchange is expecting a shipment of about 100 decoders by Monday.

The store hasn't received any new decoders for 30 days, though a few decoders were leased after some people turned theirs in as they made a permanent change of station, or PCS, he said.

"We haven't had people waiting for more than two months," he said.

Patmon said many people assigned to Misawa live off base. The popularity of Direct to Home, the American Forces Radio and Television Services off-base television system, appears to be growing, he said.

"From mid-summer to present, the demand for it has been increasingly higher," he said, attributing that, in part, to customer word-of-mouth and the addition of two new AFN channels this fall.

When the decoders come in, everyone on Misawa's wait-

ing list will be notified, Patmon said. "We'll give them a window of opportunity to come pick them up. At the end of November, nobody should still be waiting for a decoder."

Yokota could get some decoders before the end of the month, Bailey said, by taking a few from the exchange at Camp Zama, Japan, where plenty are in stock.

Bailey said that earlier this year, AAFES in Japan and Okinawa sent some decoders to Iraq, where the devices are in demand from servicemen.

On Okinawa, a recent shortage of decoders is resolved, Glenn said. It was driven in part by shipment delays and more people living off base while Kadena Air Base housing units undergo maintenance construction.

Navy bases in Japan have decoders in stock, said Jerry McMahon, services operations manager for Navy Exchange Yokosuka. No shortages were reported in South Korea.

An estimated 15,000 U.S. military households exist off base in Japan and South Korea, according to information on the AFRTS Web site, www.afrts.osd.mil.

AFRTS uses the decoder to protect its programming from unauthorized audiences; it turns on each decoder individually over its satellite links from two locations in the United States.

At most bases, the decoder costs about \$25 per month to lease. AFRTS customers also must buy a satellite dish to link into AFN off base. Price of the dish varies.

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Sailors man the rails awaiting liberty call aboard the destroyer USS Fletcher earlier this year in San Diego. The former Pearl Harbor-based ship is part of the Navy's Sea Swap Initiative, a program that rotates four crews through a single ship at six-month intervals.

Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

GAO report raises several concerns over Sea Swap program

BY SCOTT SCHONAUER

Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain — A highly touted Navy program that swaps crews at sea may offer some benefits, but a new congressional report shows that trial runs have also produced poor sailor morale and ship maintenance problems.

The Government Accountability Office reported last Wednesday that the service also has not backed up its claims that rotating crews is a cheaper and better way to do business.

Investigators determined the Sea Swap Initiative could take a long-term toll on ships and dropped a heavy workload on crews. Many sailors in each of the focus groups complained about poor morale and quality of life because they had to spend

more time maintaining the ships. Crewmembers aboard patrol coastal ships, for example, complained that they were too busy tackling maintenance issues.

Sailors aboard the USS Higgins and patrol coastal ships disliked the swap so much that they reported "a strong desire to not participate on any more crew rotations implemented like their most recent experience," the report said.

The GAO found that re-enlistments were generally lower on guided-missile destroyers that swapped crews compared with similar Pacific Fleet ships that didn't swap crews, but the Defense Department wrote that the Navy found "significantly different" figures.

The report said rotating crews is a possi-

ble alternative to the traditional way of sailors leaving and returning with their ships.

But investigators recommended that the Navy do a better job evaluating the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of swapping crews, establish standard procedures for rotations and make sure commanders share "lessons learned." The Defense Department agreed with the suggestions and cited how changes would be made.

While senior Navy officials have sung the praises of Sea Swap as a way to save money and slash personnel, the latest report mirrored an earlier study by the Center for Naval Analyses, a federally funded research and development group.

The center found that swapping crews had been successful, but the Navy should address morale and maintenance problems. Surveys showed that 84 percent of

the crews who handed over their ship to another crew said participating in the swap was worth the expense.

The Navy started rotating crews about two years ago, when three Spruance-class destroyers began the first phases of the first rotation.

The Sea Swap Initiative involves deploying one ship for 18 months or longer and rotating crews. Here's how it works: Instead of crews driving the ship back to the United States after a deployment, they fly home and a new crew is flown in to replace them.

By eliminating long transit times, the Navy says crews will have more time to execute their missions. The Navy has tested the concept with smaller ships but is looking at expanding the program to larger ships such as amphibious assault ships.

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Japanese guests of Yokota residents now allowed to drive privately owned vehicles on base

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The Japanese guests of Yokota residents now can drive their privately owned vehicles on base after completing a registration process through the 374th Security Forces Squadron.

Passes will be issued on a temporary basis only and must be approved by the security forces squadron commander, officials said.

Sponsors hoping to secure base access for Japanese visitors and their vehicles must send a letter to the 374th Security Forces Squad-

ron. It should include the driver's name and vehicle's make, model and license plate number. Dates and times must also be provided, along with a clear reason and length of time for the proposed visit.

Once the letter is submitted, officials said, it's forwarded through

the security forces pass and registration section to the squadron commander. If approved, sponsors will be required to bring the letter to the Visitor Control Center at Fussa Gate and sign in their guest.

A sample letter, along with instructions, can be picked up at the pass and registration office on the

first floor of Building 316.

According to security forces officials, the letter is normally good for a one-time visit. If the guest and sponsor are planning multiple trips, that must be specified in the request.

For more information, call DSN 225-7606.

Fighting sweeps Iraq's Sunni heartland



U.S. Marines of the 1st Division push further into the western part of Fallujah, Iraq, on Sunday. The U.S. military's ground and air assault of Fallujah has gone quicker than expected, with the entire city occupied after six days of fighting, the Marine commander who planned the offensive said Sunday.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Sunday at least 1,186 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 903 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said as of Friday. The figures include three military civilians. The department did not provide an update over the weekend.

The British military has reported 74 deaths: Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovenia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,048 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 794 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Marine Cpl. Kevin J. Dempsey, 23, of Monroe, Conn., killed Saturday in Anbar province; assigned to 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Nicholas Anderson, 19, of Las Vegas, died Friday in a vehicle accident while conducting combat operations in Anbar province; assigned to 1st Battalion, III Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

■ Army Sgt. James C. Matson, 23, of Colorado, N.Y., died Friday in Fallujah when a grenade struck his vehicle, assigned to the Army's 2nd Battalion, 2nd

Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Vicksburg, Germany.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Wesley J. Canning, 21, Friendswood, Texas, killed Wednesday in Anbar province; assigned to 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C.

■ Army Maj. Horst G. Moore, 38, of San Antonio, Texas, died Tuesday in Mosul when enemy mortar rounds detonated within his unit living area; assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, Wash.

■ Army 1st Lt. Edward D. Iwan, 28, Albion, Neb., died Friday in Fallujah when a grenade struck his vehicle, assigned to the Army's 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Vicksburg, Germany.

■ Army Sgt. Jonathan B. Shields, 25, Atlanta, died Friday in Fallujah when he was accidentally struck by a tank; assigned to the Army's 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment (Armor), 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

■ Army Spc. Raymond L. White, 22, Edmond, Ind.; died Friday in Baghdad when his patrol was attacked with small arms fire; assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment (Armor), 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. David M. Branning, 21, Cockeysville, Md.; killed Friday in Anbar province; assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Brian A. Mahan, 20, Woodbridge, Va., killed Friday in Anbar province; assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

BY TINI TRAN

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — U.S. and Iraqi forces fought deadly battles with insurgents across central and northern Iraq on Monday — the latest in a wave of clashes that has swept the country's Sunni Muslim heartland even as American troops move against the last remaining pockets of resistance in Fallujah.

The worst reported fighting took place in Baquba, where the military said at least 20 insurgents were killed. Militants hit at least four different U.S. troop convoys with car bombs, wounding nine Americans in and around the Sunni stronghold of Ramadi and in the northern city of Mosul.

A recording purported to be from Iraq's most feared terror leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, instructed insurgents across Iraq to attack U.S. forces before the military can move on other guerrilla strongholds after Fallujah.

"If it [the U.S. military] finishes Fallujah, it will move by your direction, we aware and deny it the chance to carry out this plan," said the speaker on the recording, posted on the Web.

The speaker, who was identified in the message as al-Zarqawi and whose voice resembled that of the Jordanian militant, said the Americans were overextended and "cannot expand" their operations.

"Shower them with rockets and mortars and cut all the supply routes," he urged. The authenticity of the tape could not be confirmed immediately.

A convoy of ambulances and relief supplies trying to enter Fallujah was forced to turn back because the fighting made it too dangerous, the head of the Iraqi Red Crescent said. The Red Crescent and Red Cross have been unable to gain access to people inside Fallujah during more than a week of violence.

Iraq's interior minister declared victory in the offensive.

"Fallujah is no more a safe haven for the terrorists and killers. This thing is over," Falah Hassan al-Naqib told reporters in Baghdad.

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said the leader of a militant group behind the killing of some foreign hostages had been killed.

Mosayyid Ahmed Yassen, leader of the group Muhammad's Army, was captured along with some of his followers, Allawi said. He did not say what kidnappings the group has been involved in.

Allawi's office confirmed that two of his female relatives who were kidnapped last week have been released. On Sunday, U.S. Marines found the disemboweled body of a Western woman wrapped in a

blood-soaked blanket on a street in Fallujah.

The woman could not be immediately identified, but the only Western woman known to have been taken hostage are Briton Margaret Hassan, 59, director of CARE international in Iraq, and Teresa Borcz Khalifa, 54, a Polish-born longtime resident of Iraq.

In Baghdad after nightfall Monday, heavy explosions rocked the Green Zone — the barricaded neighborhood that houses the Iraqi government and U.S. Embassy. There were two huge plumes of smoke, and loudspeakers warned, "Take cover, take cover." But there was no immediate word on the blasts' cause.

Outside Fallujah, U.S. and Iraqi troops and insurgents clashed in several cities across a belt of central and northern Iraq, including Baquba, Ramadi, Mosul and Suwayrah, south of Baghdad.

In Baquba, insurgents attacked 1st Infantry Division soldiers with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire near a traffic circle and police station, officials said.

During the fighting, U.S. troops came under fire from a mosque, the U.S. military said. Iraqi security stormed the mosque and found rocket-propelled grenades, mortar rounds and other weapons and ammunition, the statement said.

A U.S. military spokesman said at least 20 insurgents were killed, although battle reports were still being assessed.

In the neighboring town of Buzhr, Qasim Mohammed killed the town police chief, Lt. Gen. Ghassan Mohammed, in an attack on his house, officials said. During fighting in Buzhr and Baquba, American aircraft dropped two 500 pound bombs on an insurgent position.

Mohammed Zayad of the Baquba hospital said nine Iraqis — an attacker, a policeman and seven civilians — were killed and 11 Iraqis were injured in the fighting. It was not clear to what extent his count overlapped with the U.S. count of 20 insurgents killed. Four 1st Infantry Division soldiers were wounded, although two of them returned to duty, the military said.

Gunsmen carried out near-simultaneous attacks on a police station and an Iraqi National Guard headquarters in Suwayrah, 25 miles south of Baghdad. The assault came later in the day as insurgents and explosives-laden car at the headquarters. Police shot the driver before he could detonate his bomb, police said.

Seven Iraqi police and national guardsmen were killed in the Suwayrah fighting, including Maj. Hadi Baidi, the director of the Suwayrah police station, officials said.

Coalition forces turn to other cities where resistance is breaking out

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — With military operations winding down in Fallujah, U.S. and coalition forces are starting to turn their firepower to other cities where fighting is breaking out with increasing intensity, according to a Marine commander who is directing part of the Fallujah fight.

U.S. forces have now secured "100 percent of Fallujah," according to Col. Michael Regner, operations director of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

"The city is basically secure, and we can go wherever we want," Regner told reporters in the Pentagon on Monday afternoon from Camp Fallujah, a remote Marine base just outside the city.

However, securing the city is

not the same as fully controlling it, Regner added.

Moreover, "some portions of the city are more clear than others," Regner said.

Marines have detained 1,052 apparent fighters, Regner said, whom only a handful — no more than 20 — appear to be foreign fighters.

According to Regner, "We have had 37 Marines and soldiers killed in action" in the fighting in Fallujah, while there was one "noncombat death" in the city over the weekend, which he did not define.

There have been 320 U.S. forces wounded in action, Regner said, with 134 of those "returned to duty" after receiving medical attention.

Six Iraqis taking part in the coalition have been killed, with another

28 wounded, of whom two have been returned to duty, Regner said.

Meanwhile, Marines are now involved in the city of Ramadi, the provisional seat of Al Anbar province, Regner said.

"For a week now, [Ramadi] has been a no-go area," Regner said, prompting the Marines to send in two full battalions of fighters to quell fighting in the past 48 hours.

Marines have found "a number of weapons caches, and a number of terrorists have been killed or captured" in Ramadi, Regner said. "But it is not a cleared city." Regner said that some of the anti-coalition fighters in Ramadi and other Iraq cities could be fighters who escaped from Fallujah at some point during the battle, which is now in its eighth day.

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U.S. military leaders gather to plan strategy

Officers seek to keep momentum from Fallujah fight in approach to other Iraqi cities

BY JOHN HENDREN
Los Angeles Times

BAGHDAD — The United States' top military commanders converged here Sunday to craft a strategy for using the momentum from a seemingly successful anti-insurgent battle in Fallujah to pacify other embattled Iraqi cities, pressing toward a decisive "tipping point" in the war.

In an unusually high-profile mid-battle gathering, Gen. Richard J. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived from Washington, and Central Command chief Gen. John P. Abizaid flew in from his regional headquarters in Qatar. They met with the top U.S. ground commander in Iraq, Gen. George Casey, his Iraqi counterparts and the American generals in charge of Iraq's various regions.

Unlike Myers' occasional visits to troops in Iraq, the general planned this tour to discuss war strategy with senior commanders regarding the ongoing battle in Fallujah and the outbreaks of unrest in other areas, including Baghdad and the northern city of Mosul.

As many as 1,600 insurgents in Fallujah

were killed so rapidly that the streets were littered with an "alarming" number of bodies, senior defense officials said, despite Muslim strictures that require burial within 24 hours.

The American commanders expect to use information gleaned from the dead and from interrogations of an estimated 1,000 captured rebels to find insurgent leaders — possibly including the best-known guerrilla, Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi — who the commanders said left Fallujah ahead of the past week's fighting.

"I think Fallujah will show us where the leadership is," Abizaid said. "I think there are quite a few people that are in our hands right now that will tell us an awful lot about their organization."

Yet uprisings in Mosul and elsewhere suggested many insurgents might have fled to escape.

"The insurgency is like water, and when you squeeze it, it kind of goes like water," Abizaid said.

The gathering, which commanders described as the result of visits independently scheduled before the latest confronta-

tion in Fallujah, was marked by a renewed optimism among Pentagon strategists that they were making progress despite a recent rise in attacks by a stubborn insurgency.

"You never know how close you are to a tipping point," said a senior defense official involved in the talks, who requested anonymity.

U.S. and Iraqi military commanders are setting their sights on a smaller hotbed of insurgency, Ramadi, as the next likely focus of a major anti-insurgent onslaught. The deployment used to seize control there is expected to be smaller than the 10,000 American and 2,000 Iraqi forces used in nearby Fallujah.

Iraqi and U.S. officials continued to express optimism over the prospect of nationwide elections for a new Iraqi government in January but said that depended on driving insurgents from Fallujah and Ramadi, the capital of Al Anbar province.

The province is considered particularly crucial because Al Anbar is predominantly Sunni Muslim. Authorities hope that Sunnis — who were loyal to ousted President Saddam Hussein, a fellow Sunni, and have

since supported and fought in the insurgency — could be placated by participating in a new government.

Sunnis also offer a counterbalance to Iraq's majority Shiite Muslims, who Bush administration officials fear could use their power at the ballot box to steer the historically secular nation toward an Iranian-style theocracy.

Commanders intend for a bloody battle against intransigent fighters in Fallujah to send a message to Iraqis elsewhere who ally themselves with extremist groups: Those who cooperate with radical insurgents, even in the short term, will find themselves targets.

"The coalition and the Iraqis will not tolerate temporary alliances of convenience," said Abizaid, who visited Fallujah on Sunday before a late night meeting with Myers, Casey and Iraqi commanders.

U.S. military officials have been surprised by the aggressiveness of the insurgents. Attacks have been on the rise throughout Iraq, reaching 130 a day as of Friday, the defense official said. But the attacks have been weaker in recent days, he added, including a fair amount of return fire directed at U.S. and Iraqi troops.

Relief convoy turns back from Fallujah because of danger

BY ALEXANDER G. HIGGINS
The Associated Press

GENEVA — A relief convoy of ambulances and supplies reached the edge of Fallujah on Monday, but turned back after Red Cross officials decided it was too dangerous to proceed deeper into the city, officials said.

Ahmed Rawi, the Baghdad spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said the Iraqi Red Crescent convoy of four ambulances and four trucks carrying supplies reached Fallujah General Hospital on the outskirts of the city, but was unable to go into the conflict zone.

Ismael al-Haqi, director of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, said he had decided it was too dangerous for the convoy to proceed.

"I can't sacrifice the lives of the volunteers; it is very dangerous to go inside Fallujah now and we preferred not to enter," al-Haqi said, denying an earlier Red Crescent statement that claimed U.S. forces and Iraqi officials turned back the convoy.

The Red Crescent and Red Cross have been unable to gain access to people inside Fallujah during more than a week of fighting between U.S. and Iraqi government forces and insurgents.

The hospital itself was well-supplied, because no patients or wounded people have been able to reach it from the embattled city, Rawi said. "Regrettably, there was no patient in sight," he said.

Fardous al-Ubaidi, spokeswom-

an for the Iraqi Red Crescent, said earlier that U.S. forces and the Iraqi government prevented the aid convoy from crossing the Euphrates River into the main part of the city and told it to leave the hospital area as well.

Rawi told The Associated Press by telephone that the convoy then went to the south in hopes of entering nearby Amiriyah al-Fallujah, where there are civilians who have fled the fighting.

Mu'in Kassis, ICRC's spokesman in Amman, Jordan, said the agency planned to send investigators to two Fallujah suburbs, Karma and Asnaklawia, Tuesday to check on the condition of hundreds of displaced families there.

Kassis said the ICRC was concerned about people living in tents and other makeshift shelters in the cold weather, and had preliminary reports of fever, diarrhea and other illnesses in the camps, especially among children.

Kassis also said the ICRC had reports that people in areas of Fallujah not under the control of the U.S.-led forces had no access to medical care.

"We urge all parties, either the American forces or the Iraqi government, to secure the lives of people in Fallujah; this is very important," Kassis said.

He said the government should at least restore service from one of Fallujah's two main water treatment plants so that civilians can have drinking water.

Robert H. Reid and Tini Tran of The Associated Press contributed to this report from Baghdad.

Honoring those lost on a symbol of tragedy



A U.S. Marine of the 1st Division writes the words "Dark Horse" on a beam of the bridge in western Fallujah, Iraq, where the bodies of two American contractors killed by militants were strung up in March. Marines reopened the bridge on Sunday, which officers called a symbolic victory in the fight against Iraq's insurgents.

Allawi: Baghdad airport to be reopened

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Baghdad's international airport will reopen to civilian traffic Monday after being closed for a week under a state of emergency declared before the U.S. assault on Fallujah, Iraq's prime minister said Sunday.

"Tomorrow we will open the airport and we will open the borders so Iraqis can resume their normal lives," Prime Minister

Ayad Allawi said in an interview with Iraqiya television.

The airport was closed for 48 hours under the state of emergency decree announced Nov. 7. The shutdown order was extended several times.

It appeared the decision to reopen the airport was made because the weeklong fighting in Fallujah was winding down.

But Allawi said a Syrian border crossing point at Qaim would remain closed.

The area has been the scene of recent clashes between U.S. Marines and insurgents.

Syrian border officials said Sunday that Iraq already had reopened two crossings on the country's border following a 10-day closure.

However, travelers and border officials told The Associated Press that traffic was light, and motorists were advised they would not be allowed to return.

Engineers fortify Iraq-Syria border

Soldiers take a break from urban combat to build forts for Iraqi troops

BY JULIANA GITTLER

Stars and Stripes

NEAR SINJAR, Iraq — A long, sandy berm is all that separates the flat, empty border between northwestern Iraq and Syria.

But soldiers with the 276th Engineer Battalion from the Virginia National Guard are building 15 rudimentary forts that they say will help seal the porous border.

"There was nothing out here," said the Company A commander, Capt. Jonathan Gray, who is in charge of the project which spans nearly 150 miles.

The forts serve as tiny footholds for the fledgling Iraqi border patrol in an area where smugglers are common. U.S. officials have said anti-coalition foreign fighters, supplies and money have been flowing across Iraq's open borders.

For the soldiers, the project was a break from their daily exposure to makeshift bombs and city fighting.

"We went from an urban environment to a rural environment where our primary mission was not combat objectives," said Spc. Matthew Gowin, from Mechanicsville, Va., who became a plumber for the project. "It turned out better than I thought it would."

"Engineers love to leave something behind," said Lt. Col. Edward Morgan, the battalion commander. "In a sense this will be our little mark."

Fortified borders will help Iraq maintain control of its own country and help reduce risks from foreign fighters to servicemembers there.

The forts consist of a perimeter with a tower and conex living area. Personnel will have running water, electricity, heat and air conditioning — "All the basic life support," Gray said.

The project added fortifications to the large stretches between a few existing border posts. They're temporary, built to last about a year, by which time Iraq should have new forts built.

Took an orchestrated effort to move the conexes and heavy construction equipment two hours into the desert, while maintaining security.

"You can't hide that on the highways from the bad guys," Morgan said.

"That was the hardest part, loading and unloading," said Sgt. Timothy D. Atkins, attached to Company A, and a land surveyor in his civilian life in Mechanicsville. "It's a major endeavor to push that much stuff and do it as



Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Soldiers from Company A of the 276th Engineers Battalion work on a tower at one of 15 forts they built on the Iraq-Syria border. The forts will serve as tiny footholds for the fledgling Iraqi border patrol.

fast as we were, and leapfrog from site to site."

For some soldiers, the project was the third trip to the border. The support platoon fortified the berm in the spring, returned in August to repair the existing forts and again in October for the project.

They had to beg and borrow enough equipment for the job.

"That coordination took months. The actual mission took like 16 days," said Sgt. James Timberlake, support platoon sergeant from Powhatan, Va.

"Instead of just pushing a dirt pile for 200 miles, [you] start from nothing and have a com-

plete project," he said.

"It was a lot different than you see on the news," Gowin said. "We had limited contact with the people in the past."

The project had its share of difficulties, among them drastic variations in temperature, desert creepy crawlies and no facilities. It was pure field living, down to the sandstorm that ruined a meal.

"Nothing but scorpions and rats" out there, Atkins said.

But they enjoyed it. Working on the project was like a camping trip and gave them a chance to build, the soldiers said.

"I never even knew there were that many stars," Atkins said. "It

was definitely a good experience being out there."

The job also gives them a sense "that this will make a difference," Atkins said. "If it works, they could stop insurgents entering the country."

Pvt. Chris Perry, from Midlothian, Va., joined the company right before the project began, his first for the Army. At the time, he was reading a book written before the war that stressed the importance of fortifying the border with Syria.

"I think it's pretty vital that we shut down that border," Perry said. "I'm glad to be a part of it."

E-mail Juliana Gittler at: gittlerj@strips.osd.mil

New dog kennel dedicated at Anaconda base in Iraq



RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Brig. Gen. Oscar Hilman cuts the ribbon to open a new military working dog kennel at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Iraq.

BY RON JENSEN

Stars and Stripes

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, Iraq — As the kennel was being built to house the military working dogs at LSA Anaconda, Capt. William Allen Jr. was struck by a bit of inspiration.

The kennel, he believed, should be named for a military policeman, Staff Sgt. Arthur S. Mastrapa, killed at the base during a rocket attack in June.

"We responded to the attack. He died at the scene," said Allen, commander of the 362nd Military Police Detachment, a reserve unit from Ashley, Pa., but made up of soldiers from several states.

Mastrapa, 35, was not part of Allen's unit, but the kinship between military cops made the link an easy one. Plus, Allen said, there was something he saw in the news coverage of Mastrapa's funeral in the States.

"His daughter was clutching a puppy near the casket," Allen said. "It just kind of... I don't know."

The kennel opened Thursday afternoon as the sun set on Veterans

Day. In a short ceremony, prayers were offered, Mastrapa's biography was read, and Brig. Gen. Oscar Hilman, commander of the 81st Brigade Combat Team, cut the ribbon.

Allen's unit was the first to have military working dogs at this base. The dogs are capable of detecting

bombs and drugs or can be used for simple patrolling.

"It's a prestige job to have," said Allen, because the military spends a lot of money training the dogs before placing them in the hands of a soldier.

Hilman called the dogs a "combat multiplier" in the effort against insurgents. Because

of security concerns, the exact size of the kennel could not be released, according to military officials.

Mastrapa had been an MP while serving on active duty in the 1990s. He joined the reserves on June 16, 2000, and worked as a mailman in civilian life in Altamonte Springs, Fla.

He was assigned to the 351st Military Police Company from Orlando, Fla., and worked as a driver

and gunner during Operation Iraqi Freedom. After his death, he received a Bronze Star Medal.

He and his wife, Jennifer, were parents to Marissa and Reece.

A plaque will be placed on the kennel to honor Mastrapa's memory.

Allen said he spoke with Jennifer Mastrapa about the kennel dedication. She told him it was a good thing to do.

"She said she felt like the Army hadn't forgotten her," he said.

E-mail Ron Jensen at: jensenr@mail.strips.osd.mil



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| Morning Service | 1100 | Ladies Meeting | 1st Sat |
| Evening Service | 1800 | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------|--|--|
| Monday | | | |
| Faith Bible Institute | 1830 | | |
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"I had to go leftie, but I was still fighting"

3rd Battalion, 1st Marines show mettle while pushing way into Fallujah

BY JACKIE SPINNER
The Washington Post

NEAR FALLUJAH, Iraq — His first night in the city, Sgt. Aristotel Barbosa slept uneasily on the floor near the door of a vacant house that his Marine unit had taken over. A squad leader in the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, Barbosa had been prepared for the worst when U.S. and Iraqi forces began storming into Fallujah on Monday night.

Instead, the slight 26-year-old from Southern California was surprised to find rebel fighters in the city putting up little resistance. By Thursday night, U.S. troops had taken control of the northern half of Fallujah, which lies about 35 miles west of Baghdad, and Barbosa was feeling optimistic about the battle when he woke up Friday. He decided not to shave, figuring things would be over soon enough. "I'm thinking and hoping that it's not that bad," he recalled.

But for many Marine and Army units, the battle for Fallujah was only beginning. Barbosa and his squad set off on foot at 7:40 a.m. Friday following a slow-moving column of Marine infantrymen heading east just below the main highway that divides northern and southern Fallujah.

As he trudged through the desolate, rubble-filled street, Barbosa said he remembered thinking how bad the city looked, worse than he had imagined. "Basically every house has a hole through it," he said.

Then unease hit again. "All the squad leaders and myself, we knew when we got to the south, we were going to get pounded."

As they began the turn to the south, gunfire burst from a mosque in front of them. Another platoon began shooting back, and Barbosa led his squad around to the side. "The whole company kept pushing, and we started getting hit from the other side of the street," he said.

Gunfire tore through an aluminum gate when the squad passed a house. Barbosa said he felt a sting in his right bicep. He had been shot. Two other members of his squad were wounded within minutes of each other, including Lance Cpl. Matthew Vctor, 21, who was hit in the lower back just under his flak jacket.

"It was like a whole block of insurgents," Barbosa said Saturday while recuperating with Vctor in a Navy field hospital at a military outpost near the city. "They started



A Marine of the 1st Division carries a mascot for good luck in his backpack as his unit pushed farther into the western part of Fallujah on Sunday. U.S. military officials said U.S. troops had now "occupied" the entire city of Fallujah.

throwing grenades at us. It was like a shock. I couldn't believe I got hurt. I went two more blocks. I couldn't believe it."

It was 12:30 p.m. Barbosa found his gunnery sergeant, who ordered him back to a medical vehicle that the Marines call the "track" or the "Big Bus."

"I thought they were going to get me out of there," Barbosa said.

"But we kept pushing. I could still fight. I had to go leftie, but I was still fighting."

Meanwhile, Vctor felt his face, as blood trickling down it after shrapnel sliced into his skin. "I thought it was just my face," he said, until he felt the pain in his back. "I

started to run," he said. "But it was difficult. We just kept making our way to the track. The hatch opened, and I jumped in. I gave out all my ammo. They took my flak and Kevlar. The doc had me lay down in the center and pulled out some shrapnel."

Inside the medical vehicle, Vctor said he could hear the shooting.

"I'm there without my flak or helmet. You hear the shooting going on," he said. He was afraid.

The column of Marines kept moving, with Vctor riding in the medical vehicle and Barbosa continuing on foot. Barbosa said the unit had to keep moving so the airpower could come in behind them and

clear the houses from which they insurgents were shooting.

"There wasn't one house that didn't have weapons," Barbosa said.

Every house had at least one rocket-propelled grenade and a couple of hand grenades, he said.

"They were very prepared," Vctor said, as he and Barbosa sat next to each other on a green cot in the overflow medical ward at the field hospital.

"Like they were waiting for us," Barbosa said. "They were waiting for us."

As he walked along the street, Barbosa said he had to step gingerly around daisy-chained improvised explosive devices.

About an hour later, Barbosa and Vctor found themselves in a large, vacant residence not far from the scene of the gun battle. Iraqi special forces assigned to their unit found some rice and vegetables and made lunch. The Marines were nursing their wounds and eating hot chow when an explosion detonated nearby, shattering the windows and flying shards of glass in the food.

It was 1:45 p.m.

Five hours later, Barbosa and Vctor made it out of the city, to a staging area for troops. They were taken to the military hospital, where they were watching a movie Saturday afternoon and waiting to be transferred back to their unit.

Barbosa, twirling a cigarette lighter in his hand, planned to get back into the fight. Vctor, who said he could squeeze shrapnel out of his facial wounds, would not be able to return just yet.

"You know it could happen to you, but you really don't think it will be you," Vctor said, looking at the TV screen. "I'm just glad I was part of it. I was glad I got to fight with these guys. It had to be done. We were really fighting. We were doing great. It doesn't stop us. We'll keep going."

Barbosa said even when the offensive is officially over, his squad plans to remain in the city to keep the peace. He expects things may get worse then, particularly if the artillery and mechanized infantry move out.

"We're not going to kill everyone, and they're not all going to surrender," he said. "I know that a lot of them left. They'll wait for things to calm down, and they come back. They always do."

So will he, Barbosa said, taking a swig of juice from the box in his hand.

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IN THE STATES

Powell, three others resign from Cabinet

Secretaries of education, energy, labor also leaving

BY GEORGE GEDDA
AND DEB RICHMAN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Colin Powell and three other Cabinet members have resigned, escalating the shake-up of President Bush's second-term team. Senior administration officials said Monday that national security adviser Condoleezza Rice was most likely to succeed Powell.

Along with Powell's resignation, the departures of three others — Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman and Education Secretary Rod Paige — were confirmed Monday.

With the resignations earlier of Attorney General John Ashcroft and Commerce Secretary Donald Evans, at least six of 15 Cabinet members are leaving, a musical-chairs act that assures Bush a significant Cabinet faces left with his second inauguration over two months away.

"I believe that now that the election is over, the time has come for me to step down," Powell, 67, wrote the president.

Appearing at daily State Department briefing at midday, Powell told reporters he had always intended to serve just one term and said he'll remain until his successor is confirmed by the Senate.

"We have a full end-of-year agenda ahead of us," he said.

In his letter to Bush, Powell said, "I am pleased to have been part of a team that launched the global war against terror, liberated the Afghan and Iraqi people."

He also said he "brought the attention of the world to the problem of proliferation, reaffirmed our alliances, adjusted to the post-Cold War world and undertook major initiatives to deal with the problem of poverty and disease in the developing world."

The president already has chosen White House counsel Alberto Gonzales to succeed Ashcroft. Speculation on Powell's successor also has focused on U.N. Ambassador John Danforth, a former U.S. senator.

Powell, who long had been rumored planning only a single term with Bush, told the president he intends to "return to private life."

"Secretary Powell's departure



Secretary of State Colin Powell, left, and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice arrive for an April 14 news conference at the White House. Powell resigned his Cabinet post Monday.

is a loss to the moderate internationalist voices in the Bush administration," said New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, a former U.N. ambassador in the Clinton administration. "Hopefully, his replacement will be a pragmatist rather than an ideologue."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said Bush accepted the latest four resignations on Friday.

Powell has had a controversial tenure in the secretary of state's job, reportedly differing on some key issues at various junctures with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. Powell, however, has generally had good relations with his counterparts around the world, although his image was strained by the U.S.-led war in Iraq.

A former chairman of the military Joint Chiefs of Staff under the first President Bush, Powell led the current administration's offensive at the United Nations for a military attack to oust Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, arguing a weapons-of-mass-destruction threat that the administration could never buttress.

"It's been a joy to work with Colin Powell," British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said. He praised Powell as "a unique figure" who had made the transition "from being a great soldier to being a great statesman and diplomat."

Powell's role in shaping foreign policy was one of promoting

moderation and traditional diplomatic alliances with friendly nations. His influence was measured, though, since most of Bush's other senior advisers generally took a harder line and they often prevailed.

Abraham, a former senator from Michigan, joined the administration after he lost a bid for re-election, becoming the nation's 10th energy secretary.

Paige, 71, the nation's seventh education secretary, is the first black person to serve in the job. He grew up in segregated Mississippi but built a career on a belief that education equalizes opportunity.

The leading candidate to replace Paige is Margaret Spellings, Bush's domestic policy adviser who helped shape his school agenda when he was the Texas governor.

The daughter of a California peach grower, Veneman, 55, was the nation's first woman agricultural secretary.

Supreme Court overturns 1 death sentence in Texas

BY GINA HOLLAND
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday overturned the death sentence of a convicted Texas killer because jurors in his trial did not consider his learning disability and other evidence.

The unsigned 7-2 decision is another reproach of Texas, which executes more people than any other state.

Texas courts had turned down LaRoyce Lathair Smith's appeal of his sentence for the January 1991 killing of a Taco Bell manager during a robbery attempt in Dallas. The victim, 19-year-old Jennifer Soto, was pistol-whipped, shot and stabbed with a butcher knife.

In the ruling, justices cited their decision five months ago in the case of another Texas death row inmate, Robert Tennard, which opened the door to new challenges from several dozen condemned men in Texas who claim they have low IQs and were not given enough chance to present mitigating evidence to a jury.

"There is no question that a jury might well have considered IQ scores and history of participation in special-education classes as a reason to impose a sentence more lenient than death," the court wrote in Monday's decision.

Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, the most conservative justices, disagreed.

Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist had joined Scalia and Thomas in opposing the case. He grew up in segregated Mississippi but has been away from the court since last month while receiving chemotherapy and radiation for thyroid cancer, supported the latest decision, though no explanation was provided.

In his appeal, Smith argued

that jurors weren't allowed to consider evidence including that he was 19 at the time of the Taco Bell robbery, that he had a troubled home life and that he had a low IQ and learning disabilities.

A Texas court rejected the claim, saying that wasn't relevant because there was no link between the murder and his diminished capacity.

The Supreme Court has been critical of prosecutors' handling of some capital cases in Texas, which last year was responsible for 24 of the 65 U.S. executions.

Earlier this year, justices lifted inmate Delma Banks' death sentence and delivered a strong rebuke of Texas officials and lower courts for failing to ensure he received a fair trial. The court said prosecutors hid key information that might have helped Banks' case.

Last year, the court sided with a black Texas death row inmate, Thomas Miller-El, who claimed prosecutors in Dallas County stacked his jury with whites. The Miller-El case will be reviewed by justices for the second time next month because an appeals court again found that he should face the death penalty.

In other decisions, the court:

■ Declined to consider whether retailer Kmart Corp. should have paid more than \$300 million to key suppliers immediately after filing for bankruptcy protection.

■ Refused to consider whether a Colorado couple must return their adopted son to his birth mother's country.

■ Turned down an appeal from cockfighting supporters in Oklahoma seeking to reinstate the blood sport.

■ Declined to resurrect a lawsuit that accuses two German companies of assisting in the massacre of thousands of people in Namibia a century ago.

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E-1 AND ABOVE APPROVED



U.S. testing new security at Mexico border

BY LYNN BREZOSKY

The Associated Press

LAREDO, Texas — Bridges to Mexico in this traffic-choked city began testing a new immigration security program Monday that requires some U.S. visitors to be fingerprinted and photographed as they cross the border.

The screening by the Homeland Security Department was being tested Monday at crossing from Mexico in Laredo and Douglas, Ariz., and from Canada at Port Huron, Mich.

The technology — which also calls for running checks on the visitors — has been in place at U.S. airports and seaports since Jan. 5, but officials want to pinpoint any glitches before the program extends to the nation's 50 busiest land crossings by year's end.

"We always test first," said Anna Hinken, program outreach manager.

Fabian Gonzales was among the first in line Monday morning. The 34-year-old walked up to row of bank teller-like ma-

chines on the U.S. side of the Lincoln-Juarez International Bridge, answered a few questions, then inserted his finger into a small fingerprinting machine. A golf ball-sized camera snapped his picture.

Digital fingerprints and photos are matched with databases to determine if visitors might be wanted for immigration problems and crimes or are on lists barring them from entering the country because of suspected terrorist ties.

Gonzales, a restaurateur from Monterrey, Mexico, who is looking to open up a store in San Antonio, said the process was simple and took only about seven minutes.

"It's OK," he said. "I hope this new process improves the security and also helps the tourists."

Extra security requirements were passed by Congress in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and have been in place for nearly all non-U.S. citizens since January.

The information gathered at the borders will be stored indefinitely in a national database, but Homeland Security offi-

cials promised its use would be restricted to ensure privacy. By the end of 2005, the U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology program, or US-VISIT, is scheduled to be used at all 165 land border crossings. Business and political leaders in some border cities fought the system initially, fearing the program could slow traffic and have a negative effect on local economies. But, the infusion of federal money and personnel to the border could actually improve trade.

Laredo each year has 4.6 million pedestrians, 1.4 million trucks, 6.8 million private vehicles and more than 40,000 buses cross its four international bridges, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

"At the very beginning we were led to believe... that this program was going to be bad for us," Laredo Mayor Betty Flores said. "From what I witnessed... the program is going to be good for us."

Maria Luisa O'Connell, president of the Border Trade Alliance, agreed.

"From what I have seen and what I

have heard in our conversations with Homeland Security, what they're looking to do at this first stage seems to be OK," she said. "We don't believe that it's going to cause more backups or lines."

Leaders of the other two pilot sites also said they were optimistic.

Douglas, Ariz., Mayor Ray Borane said he had met with Homeland Security officials and was convinced US-VISIT would not disrupt the busy crossing to Agua Prieta, Mexico.

Thomas Hunka, city manager of Port Huron, Mich., said US-VISIT made city officials feel more secure. "Anything that helps them identify who people are helps us," he said.

Jim Williams, director of US-VISIT, said Mexican citizens holding Border Crossing Cards, or laser visas, would not be subject to the printing and photographing.

The cards allow Mexicans to enter the United States for short visits, as long as they do not travel more than 25 miles from the border in Texas, California and New Mexico, or 75 miles in Arizona.

'Super pill' also might help curb drug, alcohol abuse

BY MALCOLM RITTER

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A pill that helps you lose weight and quit smoking? That was amazing enough to capture headlines last week.

But scientists say the experimental drug might be even more versatile, providing a new tool to help people stop abusing drugs and alcohol, too.

It's called rimobant, or Acompla, and last week researchers reported it could help people not only lose weight but keep it off for two years.

That burnished the drug's reputation after two studies in March,

which suggested it could fight both obesity and smoking, two of humanity's biggest killers.

The French pharmaceutical firm Sanofi-Aventis plans to seek federal approval for rimobant next year.

But the drug's benefits may go beyond just smokers and obese people, researchers say.

"I think it's going to have a big impact on the treatment of addiction," said Dr. Charles O'Brien, an addiction expert at the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Animal studies suggest rimobant

can block the effects of marijuana and fight relapse in alcohol and cocaine abuse, said Dr. Charles O'Brien, an addiction expert at the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Once it is approved for treating obesity or smoking, "we'll be free to study it in these other areas and I'll try to get my hands on it as quickly as possible," O'Brien said.

He's not alone in his enthusiasm.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism is interested in seeing whether rimobant can help treat heavy drink-

ers, said Dr. George Koob of the institute. No human test results for rimobant in alcohol abuse have yet been published, he said.

But researchers at the National Institute on Drug Abuse reported in 2001 that a single dose of the drug could block the effects of smoked marijuana in people, not just animals. That suggests the drug could be useful in treating marijuana dependence, said Marilyn Huestis, principal investigator of the study. The institute is now pursuing follow-up research, said Huestis, acting chief for chemistry and drug metabolism research at NIDA.

Rimobant's versatility traces back to its effects on the brain's reward system, circuitry that tells you to keep on doing something. Basically, it appears to help break the connection between an activity like smoking and the rewarding feeling it causes in the brain.

The body has its own marijuana-like substances called endocannabinoids, and they activate certain brain cells that in turn can lead to stimulation of the brain's reward system.

Pleasurable things like drinking alcohol are thought to activate a feeling of reward by acting through the endocannabinoid system.

"We think that the (endocannabinoid) system is overactive by chronic smoking, or perhaps even excessive overeating," said Dr. Robert Antkowiak of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and the Cincinnati Veterans Affairs Medical Center. He's on the advisory board of Sanofi-Aventis.

Rimobant blocks the effect of the natural endocannabinoids by keeping them from latching onto the brain cells they normally stimulate, he said.

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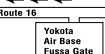
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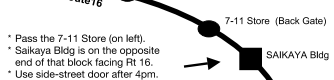
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* Public parking deck on left-side of building.

Yokosuka Naval Base (Main Gate)



* Pass the 7-11 Store (on left).

* Saikaya Bldg is on the opposite end of that block facing Rt 16

* Use side-street door after 4pm.

7-11 Store (Back Gate)

SAIKAYA Bldg

NASA 'scramjet' Mach 10 mission delayed



The 12-foot X-43A hypersonic jet is attached to a modified B-52 bomber in this image from NASA television. The third and last X-43A "scramjet" will try to fly at 7,000 mph for 10 or 11 seconds high over the Pacific Ocean off California on Tuesday and then release it for its brief powered flight.

BY JOHN ANTICZAK

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — In March, NASA launched an experimental jet that reached a record-setting speed of 5,000 mph.

Now researchers want to leave that milestone in the dust. NASA's third and last X-43A "scramjet" was set to break over the Pacific Ocean on Monday at 7,000 mph for 10 or 11 seconds — or 10 times the speed of sound.

But the mission was scrubbed for Monday, according to a message posted on NASA's Web site, "due to technical glitches with X-43A instrumentation."

"When the issues were addressed, not enough time remained in the launch window," the message read. "Another flight attempt will be made [Tuesday]."

The first X-43A flight failed in June 2001 when the booster rocket used to accelerate it to flight speed veered off course and had to be destroyed. The second flight in March was a success, reaching Mach 6.83 — nearly 5,000 mph — and setting a new world speed record for a plane powered by an air-breathing engine.

The last hypersonic X-43A will try, weather permitting, to break that record Tuesday as its advanced supersonic combustion scramjet perform at a level that can't even be tested on the ground, project officials said Wednesday from NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

"What we're trying to do is really get to the reality of flight — find out what does work, what doesn't work. So there is risk in this program," said Vince Rausch, Hyper-X program manager at NASA's Langley Research Center in Virginia.

"We fully anticipate that we've reduced that risk to acceptable levels but you never are sure, especially in doing something for the first time, going Mach 10, until we actually fly."

Just 12 feet long and 5 feet wide, the unmanned X-43A is mounted on the nose of a Pegasus rocket that will be carried aloft to 40,000 feet by NASA's B-52 research aircraft and released. The Pegasus rocket will ignite and carry the X-43A to an altitude of 110,000 feet and a speed of Mach 10, then release it for its brief powered flight.

The X-43A will then become a glider and perform maneuvers until it splashes down into the ocean.

"I have mixed emotions about this mission," said Joel Sitz, project manager for X-43A flight research at Dryden. "I'm very excited about next week. I'm also a little bit sad about seeing the end of the program. It's like watching your son go off to college."

Scramjet technology may be used in developing hypersonic missiles and airplanes or reusable space launch vehicles, with a potential for offering speeds of at least Mach 15.

Unlike rockets, scramjets wouldn't have to carry heavy oxidizer necessary to allow fuel to burn because they can scoop oxygen out of the atmosphere.

Clinton library shows flaws, too

BY DAVID HAMMER

The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — As Bill Clinton's library is unveiled at a gala opening this week, one thing is certain: His messy legacy will be on full display.

One alcove will be dedicated to impeachment, and organizers have promised not to sidestep even Monica Lewinsky or Paula Jones. The 58-year-old political superstar is expected to draw hundreds of thousands of visitors to a year to his library.

"Bill Clinton is a rock star," said Skip Rutherford, head of Clinton's nonprofit foundation that built the \$165 million library. "He is Elvis."

The William J. Clinton Presi-

dential Center, a metaphorical "bridge to the 21st century" cantilevered out over the bank of the Arkansas River, opens Thursday as the highlight of a week of programs, exhibits and symposiums.

The week will include an Aretha Franklin concert, a science discussion by astronaut and former Democratic Sen. John Glenn, dedication of new sculptures on the riverfront and at the airport, a reception to which Whoopi Goldberg, Cicely Tyson and Quincy Jones have been invited.

At Thursday morning's grand opening, speakers will include Clinton, his wife Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, President Bush, and former presidents George H. W. Bush and Jimmy Carter.



Traffic passes by the Clinton Presidential Center and Library on Nov. 8 on the south bank of the Arkansas River in downtown Little Rock, Ark.

Some 30,000 guests have been invited to gather on the library lawn and U2's Bono and The Edge will perform.

Visitors to the 150,000-square-foot glass and steel center designed by architect James

Polshek will get to see how Clinton, his closest advisers and exhibit designer Ralph Appelbaum tell Clinton's story.

Clinton has promised to give scholars early access to previously private policy advice and other

documents he isn't required to release until 2006.

He already has written about the Lewinsky and Jones sex scandals, impeachment and his political missteps in his memoir, "My Life."

Usher garners four trophies

BY ALEX VEIGA

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Usher's year of astonishing success with the chart-topping, best-selling album "Confessions" culminated with a clutch of trophies at the 32nd annual American Music Awards.

The suave 26-year-old singer was honored Sunday with a leading four trophies, including favorite male soul-R&B artist, best pop-rock album, best pop-rock artist and best soul-R&B album.

"Thank you for this moment. Thank you for this year," said Usher, whose album sold more than 1 million copies in its debut week. "It's been amazing." Sunday's win underscores a host of trophies Usher has received this year, positioning him to be a formidable factor in upcoming Grammy Award nominations.

It also was a good night for rap funksters OutKast, who brought home awards for favorite pop-rock band and favorite rap-hip-hop album for "Speakerboxxx-The Love Below." They also won best rap-hip-hop group.

Still, not everyone left happy.

Innovative rap newcomer Kanye West was shut out in all of his three nominations, including best new artist, which went to country singer Gretchen Wilson.

The ceremonies came as the rap world mourned O.D.B., the founding member of the Wu-Tang Clan, who collapsed and died Saturday at a New York recording studio, two days before his 36th birthday. In acceptance remarks, OutKast's Big Boi paid tribute briefly to the late rapper. "Rest in peace Old Dirty Bastard," Big Boi said. "We love you."

2004

Holiday Shopping Guide

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STARS AND STRIPES

Your Hometown Newspaper

Atsugi sailor dies in motorcycle crash

BY JIM O'DONNELL
Stars and Stripes

A sailor attached to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 195, Atsugi Naval Air Facility, died Sunday after a motorcycle-racing incident at Ebisu Circuit in Fukushima Prefecture north of Tokyo.

The sailor, whose name was not released pending next-of-kin notification, died at a local hospital at 2:50 p.m., according to a Navy release. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service has assumed jurisdiction and is investigating, said Lt. Cmdr. John Bernard, Carrier Strike Group 5 spokesman.

Ebisu Circuit is a racing facility that lets amateur motorcycle and automobile enthusiasts pay a fee to ride on their courses.

Bernard said the sailor had completed the mandatory Motorcycle Safety Foundation safety course required to operate a motorcycle on a military base and the MSF's experience rider course, which the Navy doesn't require.

"In either case, these courses neither teach, condone nor encourage the racing of motorcycles or operating them in an unsafe manner," Bernard said.

No information was available about the sailor's injuries. The Navy was arranging

to transport his remains to Misawa Air Base for autopsy, then to a location to be requested by the sailor's family, Bernard said. "The Navy's thoughts and prayers are with the family in this difficult time and the Navy is thankful to the family for allowing this sailor to serve."

Bernard also said VFA 195 grieves for the loss of one of its sailors. "He was part of the VFA 195 'Chippy' family," he said. Chippy is the squadron's informal name.

A memorial service is scheduled for Wednesday at Hangar 1430 at Atsugi, Bernard said. Time of the service had not been determined Monday, he said.

E-mail Jim O'Donnell at: odonnellj@stripes.ostd.mil

8 selected to E-9 at Misawa

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — Eight among 22 eligible senior master sergeants here were selected for promotion to the service's highest enlisted rank of chief master sergeant, base officials have announced.

The 36 percent selection rate is the Air Force's highest, the officials said.

Those selected for promotion to E-9 at Misawa are: John Bennett, 35th Maintenance Group; Ronald Brown, 35th Fighter Wing; Sharon Bruce, 35th Maintenance Group; William Campbell, 35th Maintenance Group; James Carter, 35th Maintenance Group; Donald DeMarte, 35th Maintenance Group; Luamata Faija Jr., 35th Mission Support Group; and Alan Onufrak, 35th Medical Group.

The servicemen will pin on their chief stripes within a year, depending on their time in grade and service.

The Air Force considered 2,688 senior master sergeants and chose 566 for promotion, a 21 percent selection rate. Last year's rate was 19.8 percent.

The average time in grade and service of this year's selectees was three and 22 years, respectively.

Elsewhere in Japan, 16 senior master sergeants out of 49 candidates at Kadema Air Base, Okinawa, were selected for promotion — a rate of 32 percent — and four made E-9 at Yokota Air Base, out of 24, a 16 percent selection rate.

The complete list of selectees is available on the Air Force Personnel Center Web page, www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/eprom/ From staff reports

Airman gets 10 months for bouncing checks

Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A 374th Maintenance Operations Squadron airman has received a 10-month prison sentence and a reduction in rank to E-1 after pleading guilty to writing bad checks in excess of \$7,700.

According to the 374th Airlift Wing's staff judge advocate, Airman Joshua Spivey admitted during an Oct. 28 court-martial to bouncing 52 checks in less than four

months. He repaid just \$450 of the \$7,700 in charges, officials said.

During his plea and sentencing, Spivey admitted he knew the checks would not clear the bank because his checking account contained \$5, according to the staff judge advocate. In a month, the airman said, he floated 49 checks worth more than \$7,400.

Spivey admitted he used the money to purchase clothes, DVDs, videos, compact discs and a television, according to court documents.

A few months later, the airman said he opened a second account at a different bank and wrote three checks to buy additional clothes and a hair dryer, the staff judge advocate said. When Spivey learned that the checks had bounced, he closed the accounts and ignored repeated requests by creditors for payment.

After Spivey pleaded guilty to all charges, a jury made up of officers and enlisted servicemen handed down the grade reduction and military confinement.



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|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
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| | GUAM/SAIPAN ONE WAY | HAWAII ONE WAY | HAWAII NOV DEP | BALI INDONESIA | NOV AUSTRALIA |
|------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| PRICE FROM | \$175 | \$338 | ¥51,000/¥38,300 \$485/\$364 | ¥52,900 \$503 | ¥53,900 \$513 |

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IMPORTANT

★★★★★

Wounded soldier walks down aisle

Buoyed by love and technology, GI stands to recite wedding vows

BY BILL BROADWAY

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Six weeks ago, Spec. Aaron Bugg was dragged from a Humvee that had been hit by a roadside bomb in Iraq, his leg muscles severed and unable to carry his weight. Last Saturday, Bugg walked down the aisle with the woman he has loved since junior high.

More than 50 friends and family members attended the wedding, in the stone chapel on the grounds of Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Bugg, 20, of the 25th Infantry Division out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, wore a tuxedo that had a specially made left pant leg to cover a "fixator," a device that stabilizes the leg while bone and muscle regenerate. His bride, Lisa McCroskey, 21, wore a beaded satin gown.

Bugg sat through much of the 40-minute ceremony, but he stood to take his wedding vows and for the lighting of the unity candle. After the chaplain, Capt. Robin W. Pizanti, presented the couple, Bugg held his wife's arm as they walked out of the church and down two small flights of steps.

"He wasn't supposed to walk that far," said the surprised best man, Matias Reveles, as he rushed a wheelchair to assist his nephew.

The wedding was one of 15 to 20 each year at Walter Reed, the Army's premier medical facility, which has treated 3,612 patients from Operation Iraqi Freedom.

But it's the first wedding involving someone wounded in a war zone since 1993, when a soldier hurt in Somalia was married there, according to Walter Reed spokesman Bill Swisher.

And this ceremony almost didn't happen.

A week ago, Walter Reed's office of the judge advocate general learned that several area businesses had offered to donate their services, which involved the groom's custom tuxedo, hairstyling for the bride and three bridesmaids, wedding programs and a honeymoon night and reception at the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown. Such donations violate the military's code of ethics and could not be accepted, Bugg and McCroskey were told.

But Ed Solomon, owner of Anthony's Tuxedos, and Fisher House, a foundation that assists wounded veterans and their families at 15 medical centers in the United States and Germany, worked out a solution.

The businesses could donate the services to Fisher House, which would give them to the couple, said Jim Weiskopf, Fisher's vice president for communications in Rockville, Md. Like the Fisher program that provides airline tickets for wounded veterans and their families, the procedure would not benefit one person but be open to all qualified personnel, he said.

The couple, who found each other in eighth grade in Marionville, Mo., got engaged last Christmas. But they didn't set a date until Bugg came home for a monthlong leave in late August, McCroskey said. They decided on January, when Bugg's infantry unit was scheduled to return from its security mission near Kirkuk, north of Baghdad.

Nine days after Bugg returned to Iraq, a bomb exploded near the unmarried Humvee in which he and three other soldiers were riding. He remembers trying to



PHOTOS BY PRESTON KERES/The Washington Post

Army Spec. Aaron Bugg, 20, and Lisa McCroskey, 21, were married Saturday in the stone chapel at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Bugg suffered severe leg injuries in Iraq when a bomb exploded near the Humvee he was riding in. Here, the bride helps her groom, wearing a custom tuxedo that accommodates a stabilizer on his left leg, on the lawn of the chapel while Danny Reveles attends the chair.

walk and wondering why he was being dragged instead. "He said the medic in a helicopter, 'Sir, don't let them take my arms or legs.'"

He was given anesthesia and has no memory of the four days between the explosion and waking up at Walter Reed. McCroskey withdrew from classes at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield to be with him.

A week later, they decided to marry sooner. An engaged partner does not have the same visitation and legal rights as a spouse, and they wanted to be as close to-

gether as possible, they said.

When McCroskey saw the chapel, she was impressed. "I said, 'Omigod, this place is beautiful. I would love to get married here.'"

McCroskey said she has seen some people "bail out" of relationships after a military member returns from the battlefield with severe physical or emotional

wounds. That's something she said she could not, and would not, do.

"Aaron's my best friend and the love of my life," she said. "I could be home in school, but I would be thinking about him and wishing I was here."

Bugg said her presence has helped motivate him and has given meaning to his recovery, which his doctors told him could take at least six months.

Cents and Sensibility

Money tip of the day

Watch out for child ID theft

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — Adults aren't the only ones who need to worry about identity theft.

Children and teenagers are prime targets, too, because they have unblemished credit records. So reports the Identity Theft Resource Center (www.idtheftcenter.org).

Young people also make easy targets because the theft may not be realized until years later, when the victim tries to open a new bank account or apply for his or her first credit card.

Teenagers may be especially prone to ignoring the signs of identity theft, warns Neal S. Godfrey in her new book, "Money Still Doesn't Grow on Trees." When the monthly credit card bill doesn't arrive, your teen may be under the impression that he or she simply doesn't have anything to pay.

Some warning signs of child identity theft include:

■ Preapproved credit card offers arriving in the mail for your child.

■ Bank, credit card or other financial statements that arrive in your child's name. This excludes those accounts that are

held jointly by you and your child.

■ Collection agency notifications or calls in your child's name.

To protect your child from identity theft:

■ Don't carry his or her Social Security card in your wallet or purse.

■ Be cautious with the release of your child's personal information.

■ Limit the copies of your child's birth certificate and Social Security number that you give out. You may be asked to provide such copies in order to allow your child to participate in sports or other extracurricular activities, reports the Identity Theft Resource Center. If so, make sure you ask who will have access to the information and where it will be stored.

■ Talk to your child about why he or she should not give out personal information. Be sure you stress the importance of safeguarding information on the Internet.

■ Check your child's credit report annually. It will include any legitimate accounts (if your teen has a credit card), as well as any unauthorized accounts and requests for credit.

EXCHANGE RATES

| Military rates | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Japanese yen (Nov. 15) | 103.00 |
| South Korean won (Nov. 12) | 1,081.00 |
| Euro (Nov. 15) | \$1,326 |
| British pound (Nov. 15) | \$1,377 |
| Commercial rates | |
| Bahrain (Dinar) | \$3.30 |
| Canada (Dollar) | \$1.88 |
| Denmark (Krone) | 1.92 |
| Denmark (Krone) | 1.92 |
| Egypt (Pound) | \$2.95 |
| Euro | \$1.29 |
| Hong Kong (Dollar) | 1.77 |
| Hungary (Forint) | 189.61 |
| Iceland (Krona) | 121.55 |
| Israel (Shekel) | 4.42 |
| Japan (Yen) | 105.53 |
| Kuwait (Dinar) | 0.296 |
| Norway (Krone) | 4.79 |
| Philippines (Peso) | 55.33 |
| Saudi Arabia (Riyal) | 1.499 |
| Singapore (Dollar) | 1.161 |
| South Africa (Rand) | 1.184 |
| Switzerland (Franc) | 1.103 |
| Thailand (Baht) | 1.482 |
| Turkey (Lira) | 1,482,275.00 |

Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For non-currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are inter-bank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.

PRECIOUS METALS

| New York Merc close | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Gold | \$437.98 |
| Silver | \$7.615 |

INTEREST RATES

| | |
|---------------------------|------|
| Prime rate | 5.00 |
| Discount rate | 3.00 |
| Federal funds market rate | 3.00 |
| 3-month bill | 2.67 |
| 30-year bond | 4.30 |

Sources: The Associated Press, Bank of America

Lisa looks to her husband as he makes the painful steps out of the aisle. "He wasn't supposed to walk that far," said the surprised best man, Matias Reveles, as he rushed a wheelchair to assist his nephew.

IN THE WORLD

Israel open to coordinating Gaza pullout

BY MARK LAVIE

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — In a policy reversal, Israel said Monday it might coordinate next year's Gaza pullout with the Palestinian Authority if it cracks down on militants — the first indication it is reassessing relations with the Palestinians after Yasser Arafat's death.

Beynon Minister Silvan Shalom brought up the possibility of coordination, a shift from Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's basic premise. He had presented the planned removal of all 21 Jewish settlements from Gaza and four from the West Bank as "unilateral disengagement," rejecting contacts with the Palestinians because, he charged, Arafat's regime was tainted with terrorism.

World leaders and commentators are assuming that the new Palestinian regime would be more pragmatic than Arafat's and that Israel should open a dia-

logue with it. Shalom's remarks indicated that Israel realizes that Arafat's death has changed the Mideast equation.

At a conference of North American Jews in Cleveland, Shalom said, "If the new leadership on the Palestinian side acts to combat terror, then we will be able to consider coordinating aspects of the 'day after' [in Gaza] with them."

Beyond the issue of the Gaza pullout, Shalom told reporters in Cleveland on Monday, "we want responsible Palestinian leadership to take control, and afterward maybe, to resume (peace) negotiations."

Israel also expects the Palestinians to disarm the violent groups, stop anti-Israeli incitement and implement security and financial reforms, another official said. Palestinian Cabinet Minister Saeb Erekat said he suspected the Israelis would put up too many conditions for coordina-



Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, right, confers with Sallai Meridor, chairman of The Jewish Agency for Israel, Sunday in Cleveland. Shalom told reporters Israel would consider resuming peace talks.

ing the Gaza pullout.

"Israel should talk to us unconditionally," Erekat said. "This line of conditioning things...has been the way [Israel] handles things."

Palestinian leaders argued that Israel should "unconditionally" resume talks on the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan.

The 2003 plan, presented by President Bush and international mediators and accepted by both sides, requires those steps of the Palestinians, while Israel is to stop building in West Bank and Gaza settlements. Neither side carried out its initial obligations, and the plan floundered.

Palestinians have set Jan. 9 elections to choose a new leader, but they appear to have a long road to travel toward stability in their own ranks.

Arafat's successor as head of the PLO, Mahmoud Abbas, was caught in a gunfire incident Sun-

day as he greeted Palestinians who came to a mourning tent for Arafat in Gaza City.

Abbas was whisked away unharmed, but two security officers were killed.

Abbas insisted later that it was not an assassination attempt.

Abbas met in Gaza on Monday with representatives of 12 Palestinian factions to discuss elections and the possibility of a cease-fire with Israel. No agreements were announced.

The Palestinians, Egypt and the United States are concerned that if Israel does not coordinate its exit, it could lead to chaos in Gaza, a crowded, poverty-stricken coastal strip where Islamic militant groups hold considerable power.

Israeli security officials said Monday that the Defense Ministry would recommend that the pact be coordinated with the Palestinians as much as possible.

However, government spokesman Avi Pazner said the withdrawal would proceed regardless. "If there is a partner, good," he said, but "even if there is not, we will go ahead with it."

In another indication that Israel was pushing ahead, a parliamentary committee approved the allotment of almost \$8 million to an authority overseeing the disengagement.

The decision cleared the way for compensation payments to Jewish settlers who evacuate voluntarily, an incentive Sharon hopes will mute settler opposition to the plan.

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U.N. backs Iran's move on uranium

BY GEORGE JAHN

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — The U.N. atomic watchdog agency gave its support Monday to Iran's agreement to suspend all uranium enrichment activities, the key element of a deal with European countries aimed at ensuring Iran does not develop nuclear weapons.

The United States, which has been pressing for tough U.N. action against Iran, has not yet given its position on any deal, saying Monday it was waiting for word from Britain, Germany and France, the nations negotiating with Tehran. The new agreement appeared to represent a victory by the Europeans after months of stonewalling by the Iranians.

If the tentative deal announced Sunday is sealed, it would prevent Iran from being referred to the U.N. Security Council, where it could face sanctions for its nuclear program. In return for the suspension, Europe has been suggesting it would help Iran in developing peaceful nuclear energy.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said in a confidential

report made available Monday to The Associated Press that Iran's promise to suspend enrichment activities by Nov. 22 would satisfy some of the agency's demands. The document also left open the question of whether Iran tried to develop the technology to make atomic bombs, saying suspicions remain about the nature of nearly two decades of clandestine nuclear programs.

Tehran's deal with the Europeans only postponed the issue of enrichment, committing Iran to a temporary suspension for the time it takes to work out the details of an aid package with the Europeans. If those negotiations fail, Tehran could resume enrichment activities.

IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei was "not yet in the position to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear materials" that could have been used for a weapons program, the report said.

But, it said, all nuclear material that Iran has declared to the agency in the past year has been accounted for, "and therefore we can say that such material is not diverted to prohibited [weapons] activities." The report was written by ElBaradei.



A young cowboy wearing a broad-brimmed felt hat tapes his wrist at an outdoor rodeo in Cessnock, New South Wales, 103 miles from Sydney, Australia, in May. Failing to meet industrial safety standards, the beloved felt hats may be exchanged for equestrian-style helmets.

Aussie cowboy hats take heat over safety

BY ROD MCGUIRK
The Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — The sweat-stained felt hats worn by Australian cowboys, as much a part of the Outback as kangaroos and sun-baked soil, may be heading for the history books. They fail modern industrial safety standards.

It all stems from the death of a cowboy, who suffered massive head injuries after being trampled in a fall from a horse while mustering bulls in July 2001. His sole protection was the tattered hat provided him shading from the sun.

The New South Wales state government brought charges against the ranch owner, who employed 23-year-old Daniel Croker, convicting and fining the company \$72,000 last month for breaches of safety, including failure to provide the horseman with an equestrian helmet.

Ranch manager Nicholas Ennis told investigators he knew of no ranch in Australia that made cowboys wear helmets except while mustering on motorbikes.

Since the tragedy at the ranch in Merriwagga, about 300 miles west of Sydney, helmets have become compulsory for working in the saddle there, but ranchers are calling for industrial laws to be changed to reflect the differences between working in the Outback and in a city factory.

News South Wales Farmers' Association president Mal Peters warned that substituting helmets

for broad-brimmed hats would increase the hazards of skin cancer and heat stroke.

He said there is no helmet a farmer can use when the temperature reaches 113 degrees. "For a farmer who's mustering a mob of sheep, moving very slowly behind them without any air circulation, he or his employee may be subject to heat stroke," Peters said.

Since the tragedy, the dead cowboy's father, Neil Croker, has become a campaigner for safer work practices on farms.

"I think we can still have that fantasy of romantic, wild west-type attitude but with safety added on," Croker told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio. National Farmers Federation chief executive Anna Cronin said Australia's leading farmers' association supported initiatives to develop lightweight, broad-brimmed hard hats as an alternative to helmets.

But former cowboy Hayden Bostock blamed apathy in the ranching industry for inadequate safety equipment for cowboys. Bostock said he has been developing a lightweight, broad-brimmed hard hat that meets Australian safety standards but has failed to attract enough support in the cattle and sheep industry to get the hat into production.

"The stockman's hat is an icon of Australia. You can't replace it with an ice-cream container on the head," Bostock said. "Being a bushman myself, we're not going to wear anything that doesn't look any good."

Israelis spot sub off coast

BY STEVE WEIZMAN
The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — A foreign submarine sneaked into Israeli waters last week, cruising the coastline near Lebanon before being detected and slipping away, Israeli authorities said Monday.

The vessel belonged to a NATO member country and was detected during the night between Nov. 9-10, an Israeli military official said on condition of anonymity. Israeli defenses spotted the vessel just inside Israeli territorial waters about 12 miles off the northern coast, the army official said.

Israeli Army Radio said the sub was in the area of Nahariya, a northern Israeli coastal town near the border with Lebanon. The official army statement gave no details of the time or location of the incident.

"The navy spotted and tracked last week an underwater target which was identified as a submarine," a

military spokeswoman said. "After it was spotted and tracked, the submarine left."

Also Monday, two Katyusha rockets were fired toward Israel from southern Lebanon. They caused no casualties or damage, Lebanese security officials said.

A Hezbollah official said the group had nothing to do with the incident.

The security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said one rocket fell into the sea on the Lebanese side of the border and the other crashed in an area near the northern Israeli town of Shlomi just across the border.

Following the 7 p.m. (1700 GMT) incident, Lebanese soldiers and policemen stationed in Lebanese border villages began searches to find out who had fired the rockets, the officials said.

In Jerusalem, Israeli military officials said they had received a report of an explosion near Shlomi and the army was carrying out searches in the area.

Austrian police round up 'Grandpa Gang' drug ring

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — A major Austrian narcotics ring dubbed the "Grandpa Gang" because of the advanced age of its members sold about \$6.6 million worth of drugs in recent years, police said Monday.

Vienna officials said they have arrested 23 suspected members since October and seized large quantities of cocaine, amphetamines, hashish and marijuana in a raid on a hairdresser salon in Vienna, police Maj. Martin Roudny told the Austria Press Agency. Police have dubbed the ring the "Grandpa Gang" be-

cause most of its members were in their 50s and 60s.

Detectives also confiscated about \$125,000 in cash and several firearms in a raid last month that frightened the alleged ringleader so much that he suffered a heart attack, Roudny said.

Some of the suspects allegedly pooled their earnings to buy a yacht they shared on Mediterranean vacations, and others lost up to \$9,000 a night on gambling sprees, prosecutors said. The suspects, who produced the drugs from the Netherlands, also were being investigated in a murder case, authorities said.

Asian Giftwares Holiday Mini-Bazaar!

Yokosuka Middle School Cafeteria

Kokeshi Dolls

Porcelain

Kimono

Jewelry

Ethnic Crafts

Philippine Crafts

Zen Japan Photos

General Merchandise

Sat. & Sun.

20 & 21

November

9 am - 5 pm

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Raymond Ko

Jewelry

Featured Vendor:

Sair International

Persian Carpets

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FACES

A music student's dream

Conductor Seiji Ozawa, artistic director of the Vienna State Opera, will open a music academy overlooking Lake Geneva.



Ozawa

The daily Tribune de Geneve said Friday the academy will offer students the opportunity to perform chamber music with world-class professors.

Ozawa, who spent 29 years with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, hopes to attract the best young talent in Europe to the school in the village of Blonay, above Montreux.

Tuition will be free, the newspapers said. Ozawa hopes to admit 20 to the inaugural class next summer.

Costs for the school's debut season will total about \$212,000, to be funded mainly by individual sponsors, private foundations and local authorities, the newspapers said.

Auditions will take place in Geneva and Cologne, Germany, in coming months, they said.

Peaches on TV

Peaches Geldof, daughter of musician Bob Geldof, will make her television debut presenting a teen documentary.

Geldof, 15, whose middle name is Honeyblossom, will write and present the documentary, which will screen on British television next year. Sam Cash, managing director of production company Ten Alps, said Friday.

Peaches' younger sister Pixie, 14, has appeared as an interviewer on the satellite television program "It's a Girl Thing," while older sister, Fifi Trisbelle, 21, works as an intern on music channel MTV.

Cash said "Peaches Geldof — Inside the Mind of a Teenager" would be a distinctive British look at the struggles of being a teen. It's expected to air in March on satellite channel Sky One.

Harry sets up in South America

Prince Harry arrived in Argentina for a stay of several weeks to work on a polo horse farm before he's scheduled to join the British army next year.



Prince Harry

The 20-year-old landed in Buenos Aires aboard a commercial flight Friday and was expected to spend most of his time at a working ranch in the Argentine countryside, local media reported.

The visit by Harry comes less than a month after he scuffled with a photographer outside a London nightclub.

The photographer, who suffered a cut lip, accused Harry of striking him without provocation in the Oct. 21 altercation. Royal officials said Harry was hit in the face with a camera and pushed back.

Martin picks up achievement award

Too much praise can turn Steve Martin into a wild and insincere guy.

The star of "The Jerk" and "Bringing Down the House" accepted the American Cinematographer career achievement honor Friday with mock cynicism.

The frequent "Saturday Night Live" guest host played aloof with friends in the audience that included Robin Williams, Jon Lovitz, Kevin Nealon, Martin Short, Dana Delany, Eugene Levy, "Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid" filmmaker Carl Reiner and "Parent-hood" director Ron Howard.

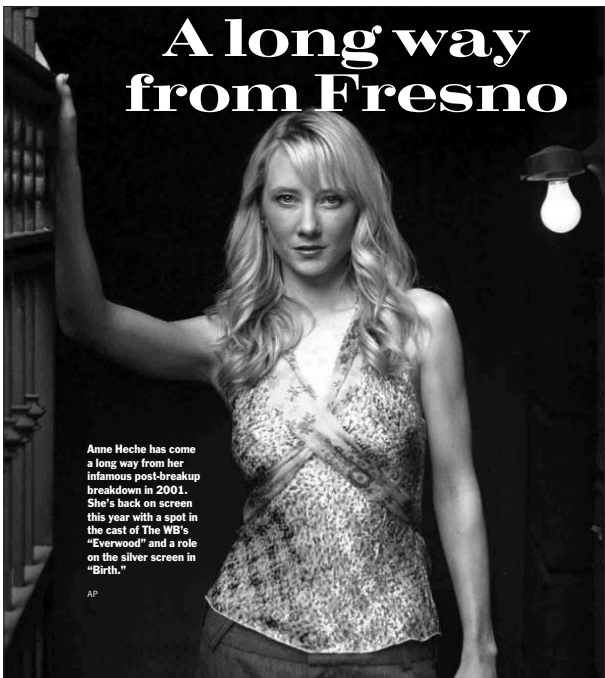
"There are so many familiar faces tonight, people I've worked with, people I haven't seen in years and I just thought, 'Why can't we wear name tags? What would be so wrong?'" Martin joked.

"But this evening is especially meaningful to me," Martin added, "because when I was a kid my friends and I used to meet after school and get all dressed up and play 'American Cinematographer awards show.'"

Rick Nicita, chairman of the organization's board, said they chose to honor Martin because he was a "Renaissance man" who has excelled not only as an actor and comedian but as a playwright, novelist, art collector — and even banjo player.



Martin



Anne Heche has come a long way from her infamous post-breakup breakdown in 2001. She's back on screen this year with a spot in the cast of The WB's "Everwood" and a role on the silver screen in "Birth."

AP

Actress makes her way back on screen after infamous breakdown

BY MARIA ELENA FERNANDEZ

The Los Angeles Times

HOLLYWOOD

Four years ago, you could have called Anne Heche crazy.

Why not? That's what the tabloids took to calling her, and it's what she called herself. "Call Me Crazy" is the title of the 2001 memoir she wrote, she said, to purge herself of her childhood demons and split personality, the one that led her to abandon her car in Fresno, Calif., wearing shorts and a bra, the day after breaking up with Ellen DeGeneres. Then she wandered into a stranger's house, where she showered, put on Mickey Mouse slippers, and tried to persuade the children there to board a spaceship to heaven with her.

In the aftermath of her Fresno Moment, Heche's once-promising career seemed to be reduced to a late-night TV punch line. So you'd be forgiven for doing a double-take at the sight of a sane-looking Heche in Armani, holding her husband's hand and looking calm and vibrant at his given Emmys, nominated for her role in the Lifetime movie "Gracie's Choice." In the weeks ahead she'll be even more visible: she'll be appearing Monday nights on the WB, where she plays Amanda Hayes on "Everwood." She

also recently starred in the CBS movie "The Dead Will Tell." On the big screen, Heche is appearing in "Birth" with the Nicole Kidman, released Oct. 29 in the States.

Could so much entertainment-industry money really have been gambled on an actress everyone, it seemed, agreed was out to lunch — who inspired the Los Angeles play "Call Us Crazy: The Anne Heche Monologues?"

Margot Kidder had her "Big Flip-Out," wandering the streets of L.A. for five years, and survived, Patty Duke went public with her manic depression in 1982 and thrived. But they had already established big careers.

Will Tinseltown be as compassionate with Heche as it was with them or with some of its most famous alcoholics, drug addicts and sexuals?

"For better or for worse, people always said that I chose life," the 35-year-old Heche said recently, relaxing with a vanilla latte at a coffeehouse near her penthouse apartment on Beverly Boulevard. "I have always chosen a path that was about finding the love of my life and finding a family. And now my focus can be on my work."

"It's a benefit that I did all those things because I have them to draw on as an actress. If you're looking for

someone with a well to explore emotionally on the screen, I can do it. My challenge now is: Can I create and can I be as creative from a place of love?"

"It's funny, you get really happy in your life and you have nothing to talk about."

Until "Call Me Crazy" was published and she spilled her guts to Barbara Walters, no one knew the back story that explained her strange behavior that day: the sexual abuse she said she suffered as a young girl, which led her to block most of her childhood memories and fill them in with delusions of flying and being the reincarnation of God herself.

Now that time and distance has made all of that a bit hazy, Heche said, she finally can chase the career others always wished for her, but that she placed on the back burner in her desperate quest for love. Her "pre-Fresno" phase lasted 31 years. At 35, and her fourth year of "post-Fresno" serenity, Heche said she is poised to take on Hollywood again, big screen and small.

"It's taken me four years to create my family and feel solid," she said. "I never had a solid family. I didn't want anyone worrying about family love. Even though I've had an incredible, incredible career, and that is my passion, I gave my life to finding the love of my life. I risked everything for that."

WEDNESDAY EVENING / NOVEMBER 17, 2004

MOVIES

● **SPORTS**

[illegible]

JAPAN TV

Afternoon
12:30 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (12)
3:12 Grand Sumo: The 4th Day (1)
5:50 News (6)

Evening
6:55 2006 FIFA World Cup Soccer: Asian Blo
Preliminary - Japan vs. Singapore (6)
7:00 NHK News (1)
7:25 Simple Rules (3)
10:00 News (1)
10:00 America's Top 40 (42)
11:25 Grand Sumo Digest (1)
3:03 TV Series: Bull (6)
4:00 Grand Sumo Digest (1)(r)

JAPAN TV-BS7

5:15 World News Hour

JAPAN TV-BS11

Morning
10:00 Classical Music: Japan Music Competition - Piano
Afternoon
1:00 Grand Sumo Tournament, 4th Day (bilingual after 4 p.m.)
Evening
7:00 NHK News
10:00 TV Series: Alias 2
1:30 Wonderful Nature

WOWOW

Morning
7:30 Oswald #43
8:00 U.S. Movie (1959): Some Like It Hot
(2/05)

10:05 U.S. Movie (2001): *Heist* (1:52)
Afternoon
 12:00 TV Series: *Sex and the City*
 12:30 TV Series: *Sex and the City*
 3:00 U.S. Movie (2003): *Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines* (1:54)
Evening
 6:00 U.S. Movie (2003): *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (2:06)
 8:00 U.S. Movie (1954): *Rear Window* (1:57)
 8:00 Spanish Movie (2002): *Hable Con Mí*
 12:05 U.S. Movie (2000): *Beautiful Joe* (1:54)
 2:20 U.S. Movie (1978): *Pretty Baby* (1:50)
 4:10 Japanese-Chinese-French-U.S. Movie (1988): *The First Emperor* (2:50)

MT

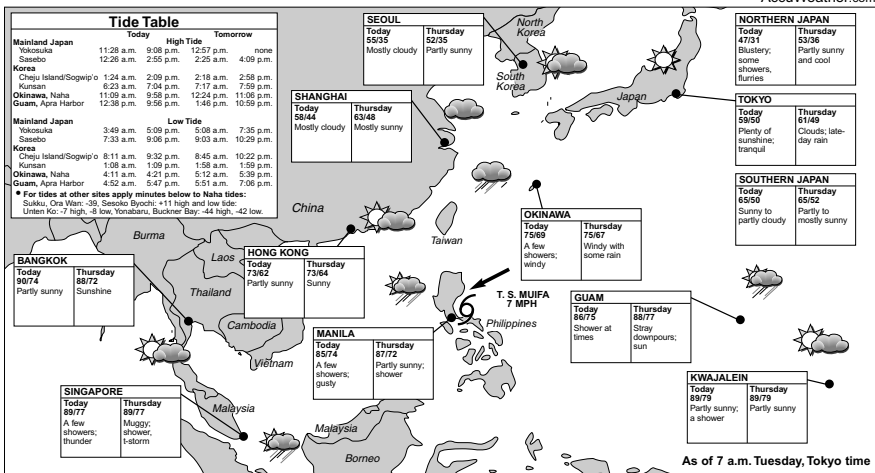
Morning
6:00 Wake Up

7:00 M Size Tuesday
8:00 Top Choice
10:00 Pure Music
11:00 Top Choice
Afternoon
12:00 YATAI
1:00 Pimp My Ride
1:30 Top Choice
2:00 Non-Stop U2 Special
Evening
6:00 M Size Wednesday
7:00 Destiny's Child Weekend Vo. 2
8:00 Top Choice The Video: Blue
10:30 Check the Rhyme
11:00 The Osbournes: Shower Boycott
11:30 Pure Music
12:00 Rocks
1:00 M Size Wednesday
2:00 Rock On
2:30 Classic
3:00 Top Choice

The Pacific Forecast

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As of 7 a.m. Tuesday, Tokyo time

Extended Forecasts

TOKYO
 Friday: Rain, high 64, low 53.
 Saturday: Partly sunny, high 59, low 47.

KADENA
 Friday: Periods of clouds and sunshine, high 77, low 65.
 Saturday: Partly sunny, high 75, low 63.

SEUL
 Friday: Partly sunny, high 53, low 32.
 Saturday: Partly sunny, high 49, low 33.

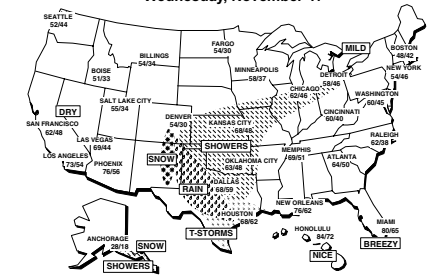
MANILA
 Friday: Periods of clouds and sunshine, high 87, low 72.
 Saturday: Periods of clouds and sunshine, high 87, low 74.

HAGATNA
 Friday: Showers, high 88, low 77.
 Saturday: Showers, high 86, low 77.

Monday's USA Temperatures

| CITY | HIGH/LOW | CITY | HIGH/LOW |
|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Albuquerque | 48/38 | Los Angeles | 81/52 |
| Amarillo | 45/42 | Little Rock | 62/47 |
| Anchorage | 31/23 | Louisville | 61/42 |
| Ashville | 62/30 | Miami | 80/67 |
| Baltimore | 61/36 | Milwaukee | 49/42 |
| Birmingham | 65/40 | Nashville | 65/39 |
| Bismarck | 61/28 | New York | 57/42 |
| Boise | 53/35 | Omaha | 58/45 |
| Boston | 53/39 | Orlando | 79/55 |
| Brownsville | 86/70 | Philadelphia | 58/36 |
| Buffalo | 55/36 | Phoenix | 72/55 |
| Burlington | 48/32 | Pittsburgh | 56/34 |
| Charleston, SC | 63/38 | Portland, OR | 54/42 |
| Charlotte | 61/34 | Portland, ME | 54/31 |
| Cleveland | 55/37 | Salt Lake City | 51/33 |
| Columbus, OH | 57/36 | St. Louis | 62/46 |
| Duluth | 47/35 | San Antonio | 64/61 |
| El Paso | 51/42 | San Diego | 79/57 |
| Hartford | 57/34 | San Juan | 85/74 |
| Helena | 52/27 | Tampa | 81/60 |
| Indianapolis | 59/40 | Tulsa | 61/50 |
| Jacksonville | 70/49 | Washington | 59/40 |
| Kansas City | 57/50 | Wichita | 53/50 |

Wednesday, November 17



U.S. Extended Forecast

By Wednesday, the pattern across the country will not have changed that much. Strong high pressure will move into the Southeast and weaken, with moisture flowing from the Gulf of Mexico into west Texas. Rainfall may not be as widespread as previous days, but still a threat for flooding. Otherwise, high pressure will allow for a good deal of sunshine and milder weather across much of the East, although there may be a shower in the eastern Great Lakes. A shot of cooler air will graze New England late Thursday into Friday, but the rest of the East will remain mild and dry. Meanwhile, an outbreak of colder air will drop into the Plains, with developing storminess by the weekend.

Wednesday's Pacific Temperatures

| CITY | HIGH/LOW | CITY | HIGH/LOW |
|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Bangkok | 90/74 | Wakani | 63/47 |
| Beijing | 55/35 | Kadena AB | 75/59 |
| Camp Casey | 56/35 | Kunsan AB | 57/43 |
| Christchurch | 61/41 | Kwajalein | 89/79 |
| Diego Garcia | 84/76 | Manila | 85/74 |
| Hagatna | 86/75 | Masawa AB | 53/36 |
| Hanoi | 74/59 | Osan | 57/37 |
| Hong Kong | 73/62 | Perth | 65/42 |
| Honolulu | 84/72 | Pusan | 60/43 |

Wednesday's World Temperatures

| CITY | HIGH/LOW | CITY | HIGH/LOW |
|-----------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Acapulco | 91/74 | Budapest | 44/39 |
| Athens | 56/44 | Buenos Aires | 68/54 |
| Auckland | 60/49 | Cairo | 82/53 |
| Baghdad | 75/47 | Cancun | 80/67 |
| Barbados | 86/71 | Cape Town | 80/61 |
| Barcelona | 56/45 | Geneva | 45/40 |
| Berlin | 45/42 | Islamabad | 52/40 |
| Bermuda | 65/55 | Jerusalem | 70/55 |
| Brussels | 51/39 | Johannesburg | 26/17 |
| | | Kabul | 56/28 |
| | | Kiev | 35/24 |
| | | Kuwait | 85/64 |
| | | London | 55/44 |
| | | Madrid | 55/45 |
| | | Mexico City | 73/45 |
| | | Montreal | 45/33 |
| | | Mogadishu | 86/74 |
| | | Moscow | 25/17 |
| | | Nairobi | 70/52 |
| | | New Delhi | 84/51 |
| | | Oslo | 30/25 |
| | | Paris | 49/38 |
| | | Rio de Janeiro | 77/65 |
| | | Rome | 58/47 |
| | | St. Petersburg | 26/19 |
| | | Stockholm | 29/23 |
| | | Warsaw | 40/31 |



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A dog's intuition

RI EXETER — The devotion of a hunter's two dogs probably saved his life after he suffered a stroke early this week, fell and lay in the woods through the coldest night this autumn, conservation officers said.

Steven Goslee's two yellow Labrador retrievers huddled against him all night as the air temperature fell to 15 degrees. In the morning, one pooch ran off to catch the attention of another hunter, who summoned help from game wardens from the Department of Environmental Management.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Puppies burned

CO GOLDEN — A 20-year-old man pleaded guilty to aggravated animal cruelty for stealing five puppies and burning two of them to death.

Ryan Turtura was accused of breaking into a Colorado Humane Society shelter in February and stealing the dogs. Court records said he admitted setting three of them on fire. One of the burned puppies survived.

Turtura could receive up to 10½ years in prison and faces fines of up to \$800,000 when sentenced in January. He has been held on \$25,000 bail.

Fieri bridge crash

IL EAST ST. LOUIS — A commuter van carrying workers from two aerospace companies collided on with a tractor-trailer on a Mississippi River bridge, killing four people in the van and injuring four others, authorities said.

State police said the van was on the Martin Luther King Bridge before dawn when it struck the 18-wheeler, spilling diesel fuel that caught fire near the Illinois end of the bridge. The flames were quickly extinguished.

The wreck closed the busy, four-lane bridge between East St. Louis and St. Louis for about five hours. The bridge is one of three crossing the river at St. Louis.

Thief not camera-shy

CA CAMPBELL — Smile, security camera thief! You just gave police your portrait.

Police are seeking the public's help in identifying a bumbling crook caught in the act by a surveillance camera, which captured his crystal-clear mug shot as he reached up to swipe it.

"When these guys help us do our job, I'm very happy," police Sgt. Richard Shipman said. The photographer is a suspect in a string of surveillance-camera heists.

Guard shoots student

LA NEW ORLEANS — A security guard shot a teenager in the foot at a New Orleans high school, believing he was reaching for a weapon during a confrontation.

Tomika Thomas told police she smelled marijuana when she spotted the 16-year-old boy standing alone under a tree outside Booker T. Washington High School when other students were in class or the cafeteria.

Thomas said she approached the student and tried to detain him, but he became aggressive, pushed her, then reached under his shirt.

Police found no drugs or weapons on the boy, who ran away after being shot and was caught by a second security guard.

The student was taken to a hospital. Police said the wound was not life-threatening.

Heartless thieves

MO ST. LOUIS — To Candace Ullrich, it's nothing but heartless — thieves again have put a jobs program for mentally challenged adults out of business by stealing the lawn and landscaping tools of their trade.

This theft was the third in a year for the Horticultural Jobs Program that Ullrich supervises. And not surprisingly, she says the losses — and callousness — are getting old.

News of the burglary, however, has generated an outpouring of generosity, with homeowners offering their extra weed trimmers and lawn mowers. An area lawyer sent, by courier, a \$500 check.

Ullrich hopes the program should be fully stocked soon.

Too close for comfort

NY NEW YORK — An apparently emotionally disturbed man stripped naked and jumped into an exhibit with two young caimans at the Bronx Zoo, police said.

The man, whose name was not

released, was intent on interacting with the alligator-like reptiles, reaching for them while sitting on a rock as stunned police officers — who rushed there from a zoo substation — looked on.

But before he could make contact with the reptiles, a zoo worker slid a plywood board in front of them, preventing the caimans — each about four feet long — from reaching the man.

Cooked-up scholarship

NC RUTHERFORDTON — Ten-year-old Brownwyn Fadem has cooked up \$25,000 for college.

The fifth-grader who likes to cook for her friends won a \$25,000 scholarship with a lasagna dish that impressed a celebrity chef. Brownwyn learned she had won the contest sponsored by All Laundry detergent while appearing on "The Tony Danza Show."

More than 200 young chefs nationwide entered the contest and 25 were named finalists. Judges and Internet voters selected the winner.

Fallen hero

MN ST. PAUL — A decorated Navy veteran who robbed a credit union and then hid in the Mississippi River in scuba gear was sentenced to 11 years in prison.

Mark W. Samples, 41, of Hager City, Wis., was convicted in May of stealing more than \$70,000 in the holdup. Witnesses said he fled on a mountain bike, then made his way to the river's edge, donned scuba gear and drifted downstream to his car.

Samples claimed at trial that he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as the result of a 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS Stark that killed 37 sailors, including Samples' best friend.

Cemetery life extended

NM SANTA FE — Santa Fe National Cemetery is getting an aboveground burial vault, which will extend the life of the military cemetery until 2018. The cemetery opened part of its columbarium, a three-wall structure that eventually will have about 3,000 niches for cremated remains. The 81-acre cemetery had been expected to be at capacity as early as 2008.

Astronaut's son arrested

CA SAN FRANCISCO — The 54-year-old son of astronaut Walter Schirra was arrested at San Francisco International Airport on child sex charges as he tried to board a plane for Thailand, allegedly to solicit sex with underage boys, federal agents said.

Walter M. Schirra III of San Francisco, a property manager, was arrested. A search of his luggage revealed photos of shirtless Asian boys, sexual-performance prescription drugs, condoms and large amounts of candy, said Special Agent Catherine Miller of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

None of the seized items is illegal, but a search of a computer at Schirra's home revealed images of child pornography, Miller said.

Schirra is being held without bail pending a hearing.



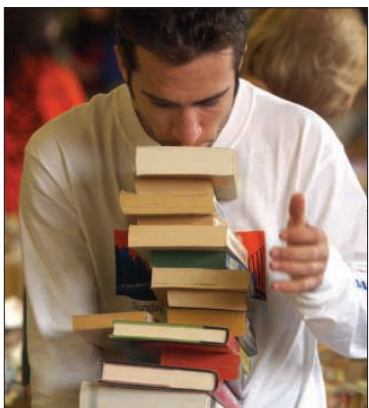
Time for a catnap

A Siberian tiger hangs its tongue out of its mouth during a yawn as it settles in for an afternoon nap at Lee Richardson Zoo in Garden City, Kan.



Ice princess

An early-morning skater graces the ice on the opening day of ice skating at the Crown Center Ice Terrace in Kansas City, Mo.



Book worm

Mark McCraw of Raleigh, N.C., tries to balance a tall stack of books he is intent on buying at the Wake County Public Libraries book sale.



Basket cases

Red River High School cheerleaders Jessica Pastir, left, and Nikki Elm perform toe-touch baskets during practice at the Red River Gym in Grand Forks, N.D.



Keeping warm

Clean water activist Christopher Swain, 36, of Colchester, Vt., left, hugs his daughter Rowan Swain, 4, after completing an 81-mile swim down the Charles River. Swain made the swim to draw attention to water pollution.



Potty on the go

Garrison Hale, sitting in the driver's seat, steers an outhouse while other members of the Q-92 team, Kathy Limberg, left, and Maynard Meyer push. Norsky Outhouse racing in downtown Madison, Minn., is part of the town's Norsefest.



Down on the bayou

Barely stirring the water, paddlers begin a four-day trip down Bayou Lafourche from Donaldsonville, La. The float was organized by the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program to raise awareness about the bayou.

Squirrel gets a good home

PA HARRISBURG — Nutkin the Squirrel can live out her later years hunting nuts indoors with a Pennsylvania couple, a court has ruled.

The gray squirrel, which was born in South Carolina where there are no rules against domesticating wild squirrels, may be kept by a Schuylkill County couple despite state laws that prohibit keeping wild animals as pets, a Superior or Court panel ruled.

Nutkin's owner Barbara Gosselin was charged in 2002 with violating the ban on keeping wild animals after a game officer came across Nutkin while investigating a case of deer poaching.

Gosselin's conviction was overturned and the judges ordered that her \$100 fine and costs be returned.

Stomach full of surprises

CA SANTA CRUZ — A jail inmate allowed to attend a family funeral returned to the jailhouse 12 hours later with a stash of drugs and syringes in his stomach, authorities said.

Josiah Robertson, 30, had been in jail since Oct. 18 on charges of selling and transporting heroin and resisting arrest. Deputies suspected he may have planned a drug run when he asked to attend the funeral, police Sgt. Steve Carney said.

Laxatives and an enema were used and Robertson "gave them up within five hours," Carney said. Robertson expelled 17 grams of black tar heroin, 20 grams of marijuana and four hypodermic syringes.

Lead infections drop

ID KELLLOGG — The amount of lead detected in children who live between Mullan and Cataldo in northern Idaho is dropping, the state health department said. The blood-lead levels for children age 6 and younger nearly met the goal for the Coeur d'Alene Basin. Child blood-lead levels were once at emergency levels. But they dropped dramatically since the Pioneer Hill Smelter was closed in 1981 and the cleanup program for contaminated soil was developed.

War hero database

MO JEFFERSON CITY — More than 576,000 Missourians who served in the military from the territorial era through World War I are now listed in an Internet-accessible database hosted by the secretary of state's office. The database, which went online in time for Veterans Day, expands an online listing of World War I veterans, which debuted about two years ago. The new version includes information from 12 wars and military engagements, beginning with the War of 1812.

Cattle anthrax deaths

ND BISMARK — Fifteen beef cattle died from anthrax on a Dunn County farm last month and were burned and buried as a precaution, the state veterinarian says. Veterinarian Susan Keller said the Taylor-area farm is under quarantine, but the cattle deaths pose no threat to the public. Keller chose not to publicize the information last month to avoid an

unnecessary scare, she said.

Store owner arrested

TN RED BANK — The owner of a shaved ice business was arrested after two employees claimed he spanked them for making mistakes at work.

Paul Eugene Levensgood, 57, was charged with two counts of sexual battery after the 19-year-old women complained.

One of the women told police that on her first day at the Tasty Flavors Sno Biz, Levensgood made her sign a statement that said: "I give Gene permission to bust my behind any way he sees fit."

Police Sgt. Jay LaFrance said the women likely accepted the spankings instead of leaving immediately because they were "brought up to respect anybody who is an authority figure."

Levensgood was freed on \$2,000 bail pending a Nov. 16 court hearing. His franchise in this Chattanooga suburb was closed.

Nuclear dump dispute

NV LAS VEGAS — Opponents of a national nuclear waste dump in Nevada lost their chance to put an ally in the White House with President Bush's defeat of Democratic Sen. John Kerry.

Bush carried Nevada by 2 percentage points after facing heavy Democratic criticism that he reneged on a 2000 campaign pledge when he approved the plan to entomb 70,000 tons of the nation's most radioactive waste 90 miles from Las Vegas.

Kerry promised that Yucca Mountain would not open on his watch.

Nevada is pressing lawsuits, hoping to stop the government from moving highly radioactive waste from commercial and military sites in 39 states to Yucca Mountain beginning in 2010.

WTC park planned

NY NEW YORK — A small park festooned with sweet gum trees and pink azalea bushes will be built on the north end of the redeveloped World Trade Center, according to newly unveiled plans.

The tiny park, which will cover about a third of an acre at the intersection of Greenwich Street and West Broadway, will open late next year or in early 2006, developer Larry Silverstein said at a conference sponsored by Business for Social Responsibility.

It will also serve as a forecourt to the new 7 World Trade Center, a 52-story office tower that replaces a building destroyed in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. The tower will open for business early next year.

Lawyer gets DUI charge

FL TAMPA — A prosecutor known for being "tough as nails" in drunken driving cases was charged with a DUI after police said they stopped her with three children in her car.

Lydia Dempsey Wardell, 37, was arrested near her home and was found to have a blood-alcohol level of 0.23 percent, nearly three times the legal limit in Florida for drivers, police said.

She was released on \$500 bail.

Stories and photos from wire services

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Focus on mission, not CIB

In regard to the Oct. 25 letter "Support soldiers get the shaft," I have read many articles, both coming from both sides.

I have put in many years in the military, both on active duty and in the Guard. It is a shame that the military can't support the fact that we all support the same mission, in different ways, for the same cause. Yes, some have been shot at or had an improvised explosive device blow up on them. In this deservings of the coveted Combat Infantryman Badge? I don't make that decision, but Army regulations do that for us and that is what we have to live by.

The guys who are infantry have a job to do, according to some of the letters I have read. Yes they do, and most of them do it well, just like the support people have a job to do to help support the infantry soldiers' mission. Without the support people, the infantrymen would never be successful with their missions. Unfortunately, some infantry guys forget this and think they can do it all. If that is the case, then send us home. I am in a battalion that I feel has an important job over here that supports the 1st Infantry Division mission.

We are what we have been called, "The Trailblazers." Our main mission is to keep the main supply route clear of roadside bombs, which means doing patrols for us limited amounts of time, house raids, convoy security, combat engineer tasks, explosive ordnance disposal and be military police. So, do we qualify for the CIB? We receive all the letters of infantry training before coming to Iraq.

Are we qualified yet? I don't care! Let the infantry guys get their coveted badge. What's important here is that we all do what we are supposed to do. Mission and support. Iraq regain its sovereignty. I will be happy to do my job as best I can and return home with all my soldiers.

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Baltzell

Forward Operating Base O'Ryan, Iraq

Punishing the right people

I think the writer of the Nov. 12 letter "Soldiers should be punished" was right in thinking someone should be punished for not completing the fuel supply mission. But the people who may need to be punished aren't the drivers of the supply trucks. How many times did the drivers risk their lives delivering supplies down roads riddled with craters from past detonations of roadside bombs and burnt-out vehicles on the sides of the road, just waiting for their time to come when they get hit? They did it in substandard equipment, too.

Did those in command of those units know the drivers were risking their lives? Did those in command know improvised explosive devices and rocket-propelled grenades have killed soldiers driving down those very same roads? Why didn't the convoy have the equipment the soldiers needed to be safe until they decided to put their feet down?

Those soldiers will definitely set a precedent. It will be one that commanders give the soldiers risking their lives every-

Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorials and columns that are published in the newspaper, and values letters or topics of importance to the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity.

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thing in their power to protect themselves and get the mission done, and done as safely as possible.

Sgt. Don Asher
Kirkuk, Iraq

Column off mark, out of place

I am very disappointed that Stars and Stripes has joined the ranks of the liberal media by publishing the type of garbage that one sees in papers such as the Los Angeles Times. "Team Bush got its use out of 'moral values'" by Jonathan Chait (column, Nov. 10), a perfect example of left-wing crybabies putting about losing the election. I could care less what Mr. Chait's opinion is or I am sure our troops don't care either.

Here's the real reason why the Democrats are losing support in the United States: They either are not out of touch with the conservative majority that is America, or they just don't care. Does this guy actually believe that the main reason people voted for President Bush is to oppose gay marriage?

Stripes should stick to the news. If Stripes must post opinion, it should post the opinions of our troops and their families.

Richard Smith

Philadelphia

Jesus was a liberal

Some conservatives think they have a monopoly on Christianity. They have even turned "liberal" into a dirty word. Liberals were against slavery, segregation and child labor, and for equal rights regardless of gender and race. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy were liberal. Strom Thurmond and George Wallace were conservative. If you had to choose a side, which one would you be on?

I consider myself a centrist, but my favorite liberal is Jesus. No matter how hard you thump your Bible, Jesus wasn't orthodox or liberal. He wasn't a hard-liner, hawk or warmonger. Jesus believed in peace, love and

the Golden Rule. He didn't support pre-emptive war, the death penalty or tax breaks for the rich.

Jesus was liberal. What's wrong with that?

Chuck Mann
Greensboro, N.C.

Best team in the world

The U.S. Olympic team won the most medals in Athens in August. I used to hear winning stories in the Olympic villages but, after participating in four Olympics, I wanted to join the best team in the world. Now, I am in the U.S. Army, which, in my opinion, is that team.

My team prevents aggressors from taking away our way of life, liberties, our government or our land. Not one of us entered the military to get rich, and no one is a superstar. We consider peace and safety more important.

Despite the press and people who misunderstand the point of the deployment in Iraq, some members of the Army perform, with sacrifice, conventional combat roles such as patrolling and hunting insurgents. Mortar attacks, grenades, rockets, ambushes and roadside bombs are part of their daily life. Other troops have been involved in delivering toys to children and equipment for schools, providing police, medical and leadership training, fixing water-treatment plants and directing rebuilding programs.

We spend more time together. I do not know of any other team in the world that works 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. We fight to win because in war, unlike sports, there is no second place. Soldiers who team are proud, and even though we may be unknown players for the rest of our careers, we say, "It is the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of speech."

"It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech."

"It is the soldier, not the lawyer, who has given us the right to life, liberty and justice."

Staff Sgt. Walter Challa

Baghdad

Insurgents regrouping?

My husband is in Iraq participating with the Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom. I've been glued to my TV while the attack on Fallujah is taking place, as my husband could be involved. He is based at a forward operating base near Fallujah.

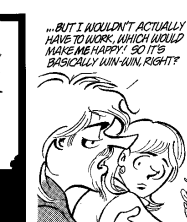
When I hear updates on the Fallujah attack going better than planned and our forces are not coming up against much insurgent activity, it only gets me wondering about where the insurgents have gone. If they're not staying to fight for Fallujah, they have probably dispersed throughout Al Anbar province and made the capital of the province, Ramadi, all the more dangerous. I think that the insurgents are more intelligent than to stay in a city where all our forces are concentrated and they will recruit to a new city, such as Ramadi, and restart their war there. There is no military presence but they're not worried right now about that city.

Am I the only one who thinks this?

Jilliane Linse
Plymouth, Ind.

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Doodlesbury



OPINION

Bush, Hu bring much baggage to meeting

Expect smiles all around when President Bush meets Chinese leader Hu Jintao later this week in Chile at the annual summit of the United States and Pacific Asian leaders.

Daniel Snider



U.S.-China relations under Bush had a rocky start four years ago when Chinese aircraft forced the landing of an American spy plane.

But those tensions have largely faded in favor of partnership on a range of issues, from terrorism to North Korea's nuclear program.

"Now," a senior Asian diplomat told me, "Beijing feels comfortable with the Bush team."

While Beijing's comfort level has increased, however, the Chinese leadership is uneasy over the muscular unilateralism of American policy under Bush.

"Those fears are mirrored in Washington. Worries about China's rise as a great power were subordinated in the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001. But they have not gone away."

A small window onto the tension beneath the smiles opened up just before the U.S. election. A few days before the vote, the English-language Chinese Daily published an unusually frank critique of the U.S. role in the world, penned by China's elder statesman, Qian Qichen.

Qian portrayed the United States as an empire off course, eager to use force, overstretching, arrogant and headed for demise.

The United States, he wrote, is using its anti-terror campaign to tighten control over the Middle East, Central Asia, Southeast and Northeast Asia. These moves "have made it obvious that the United States has not changed its Cold War mentality and that the country is still accustomed to applying military means to deal with various threats, visible or invisible."

The document made its way to the White House, where it was read as an indirect endorsement and anticipation of the victory of Sen. John Kerry. President Bush was enraged, according to a senior administration official. Secretary of State Colin Powell called in the Chinese ambassador to formally complain.

The status of the author suggested that "this was not a case of one person making a bad call," the official told me. Qian is the architect

of China's foreign policy from the late 1980s through 2002, when he retired as vice premier. He remains a powerful influence, a man who has direct access to American and Chinese leaders.

Chinese officials told the Bush administration that the timing of the publication of the article was unintended. According to Chinese sources active in reform circles of the ruling Communist Party, Qian's article was first published on Oct. 18 in *State Weekly*, a magazine for training high-level party cadres. A week later it appeared on major Chinese-language Web sites. Then *China Daily*, a government paper aimed at a foreign audience, published it.

My Chinese party sources accuse the Americans of being "too sensitive" to criticism. The Europeans have been much more critical of Bush policy than China, one told me. Americans need to understand that China is a more pluralist society where all sorts of opinions are expressed. After all, he points out, in democracies such as India and South Korea, "there are many voices against America's unilateralism and the war in Iraq."

But some U.S. officials see Qian's views reflected in quiet efforts to expand Chinese influence and to counter American dominance. "They are getting a lot of traction in Asia and in certain Eu-



ropean circles where there is broad and wide ambivalence about the U.S. now," the senior official says.

As an example, the Chinese rushed in to embrace the Philippines after that U.S. ally decided to withdraw its forces from Iraq. Among other things, they proposed an intelligence-sharing relationship between the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army and the Philippine military, an offer that alarmed U.S. officials.

When Hu meets Bush, the talk is likely to center more on Taiwan, where China wants the United States to crush the pro-independence ambitions of Taiwanese leader Chen Shui-bian. Terrorism and trade issues will no doubt be discussed as well. But as is often the case in this complex relationship, if you want to know what is going on, you need to look beneath the smiles.

Daniel Snider is foreign affairs columnist for the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury News

Internal squabbles limit CIA's ability to improve

The CIA is an unmitigated mess. That's just a fact. It uses weapons of mass destruction where there weren't any. It failed to warn domestic agencies, namely the FBI, about

Dan Thomasson



pious figures who ultimately were involved in 9/11. Its resources in the Arab-speaking world where they were needed the most have been so bad it never has been able to pinpoint the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden. It believed that Iraqi citizens would welcome Americans with open arms. Can anyone spell insurgency and Fallujah?

Now, at the most crucial time since the end of the Cuban missile crisis, its mission is being further eroded and disrupted by an all-out squabble in the Directorate of Operations, the tail that was the largest dog for the war. The warfare, according to reports, stems from unhappiness of Directorate of Operations veterans over changes being made by former Rep. Porter Goss, R-Fla., who succeeded George Tenet as overall agency chief. Resignations have come from the deputy director and probably will from other top personnel. Morale is said to be declining rapidly.

Well, the morale of Americans isn't much better when considering that this and the often-incompetent FBI are the lead agencies in keeping the barbarians' bombs away from our gates.

Is it any wonder then that there is growing support for tearing up things and beginning again — which Congress, in effect, has taken a step toward in pending legislation that would create a new overall central intelligence director with budgetary authority over the activities of both the CIA and the

FBI? The next move logically would be to create a brand new agency modeled after Britain's MI5 with both domestic and foreign intelligence responsibilities, although that will be some time off.

The latest CIA problem is one that President Bush probably inadvertently brought about with his appointment of Goss. A one-time employee of the agency and chairman of the House committee on intelligence, Goss seemed a good choice despite complaints of partisanship. He may understand agency needs, but apparently he has trouble making changes without causing chaos, that isn't too harsh a word. He reportedly is relying on personnel, some with CIA backgrounds, who came with him from Capitol Hill and who have ruffled the feathers of agency veterans.

Goss, meanwhile, has refused to listen personally to complaints or advice, if these persons are accurate. Ironically, Louis Freeh was the same man when he took over the FBI. He brought with him a cadre of outsiders who angered bureau veterans, and he

ended up being considered by many the worst of the bureau's directors since the death of J. Edgar Hoover. ... One would have thought an elected official with Goss's experience would have understood the political subtleties needed in handling the long-time operations.

No matter who is to blame for this nonsense, which includes damaging leaks to the press, James Woolsey, a former CIA director appearing on television on Sunday, was correct in his assessment that the agency needs to put it aside and go on with the business of trying to protect the nation from another terrorist disaster. Americans should be outraged at even the suggestion that personal matters and personality disputes and power struggles are being put above their safety. As their supreme representative, Bush needs to intervene.

Over the decades the CIA has been assaulted by any number of reformers who seemed to cling to the notion that gentlemen don't read other gentlemen's mail. That silly stance, of course, was put to rest once and

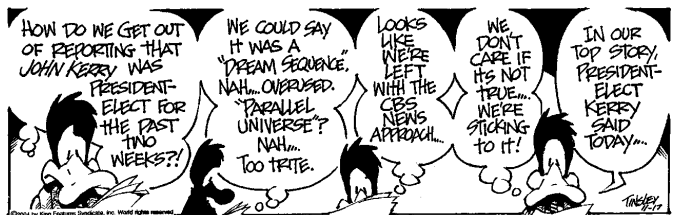
for all by 9/11. The super-clean concept of internal intelligence gathering was first pronounced and then imposed on the agency by the misguided former Sen. Frank Church of Idaho. Church's Senate hearings ultimately resulted in demonizing the CIA and virtually destroying human resources in favor of satellite surveillance in key areas like the Middle East. If there is no place in today's realities.

If the agency is to convince Americans that it is populated with mature men and women and not boys and girls playing spy, its top personnel must end the internal conflict. If Goss can't bring this about in an orderly fashion, the man who appointed him should look for someone who can. Perhaps better yet, it may be time to really reform the way we gather intelligence. In some ways, the House- and Senate-passed bills to establish a new intelligence directorate being considered by a conference committee are a start, but the current strife inside the agency indicates much more is needed.

Dan Thomasson is former editor of the *Scraps* Howard News Service.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



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Horoscope

The tendency is to flit and float like a butterfly doing whatever catches your fancy. The phone rings, the e-mail icon bounces up and down, and there's a steady stream of distraction served up with a pleasant smile. Do at least three quantifiable tasks. Then, you'll avoid wondering at the end of the day, "What did I really accomplish?"

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (November 17). This is a year of expanding your ideas about what is possible, and there's a steady stream of distraction served up with a pleasant smile. Do at least three quantifiable tasks. Then, you'll avoid wondering at the end of the day, "What did I really accomplish?"

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It's fantastically lucky both financially and socially to keep written track of your time. Something about documenting your life makes you feel present, able and motivated — especially when you look back on those scribbles later.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Even if you have no hard evidence that there are good things to come, you're somehow filled with anticipation. Connections with Virgos and Sagittarians are lucrative, though you'll be paying dues for a while.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Loved ones affect you strongly. You'll spend the day alternately enthralled and baffled. Let them have their own dramas. Fortuitous meetings are featured in the evening. Something that starts out all business turns into riotous fun.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). If you're wondering whether a loved one's sweet gesture is enough to erase this person's wrongdoings from your memory for good, here's the answer — no, it won't. Getting to the heart of the problem is imperative.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Friends urge you to disclose the scintillating details of recent goings-on. Some

facts about your life are no one's business but your own. The secret you keep inside grows in power, giving you fuel to do what you must do next.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

When you believe in your talent, you teach others how to believe in you as well. It's not arrogance — really! Confidence is a necessary component of being an artistic visionary. Put in the necessary hours.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Romantic feelings are thick and engulfing. It makes you long for the days when love was as light as a sheet of fabric suspended. A change of environment will help you get back your levity and therefore your productivity.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Knowing more will change how you act. But extraordinary information can only come through when you're using your usual five senses to the fullest. Clue in to the details — a crack of the voice or the squint of an eye.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Events seem to line up for the sole purpose of recreating a past shock. This gives you a chance to review how you felt in the past and see if you'd like to choose a new feeling this time around. You do control your feelings.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your heart is yearning. Getting more variety into your life is one key to finding love. The other is believing that you have enough love already and seeing it in the people around you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Discipline becomes an issue. The "if word doesn't have to be such a big thing, in fact discipline is mainly about your small, daily habits. Someone you would do almost anything for will ask for a lot now.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Matters of faith arise at work. Use that strong moral compass to cherry-pick your business alliances. Tonight, you're quite easy to please. You're happy to make someone else happy.

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Jump Start



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Cathy



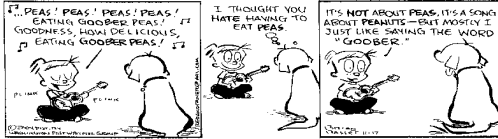
Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



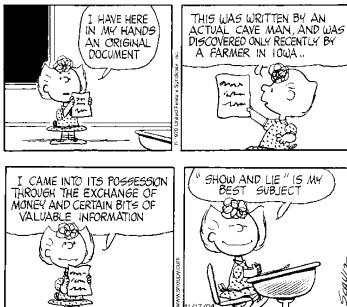
Red Rover

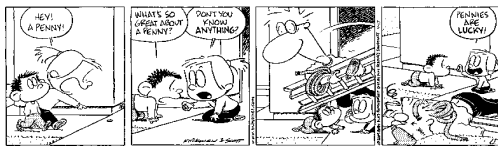
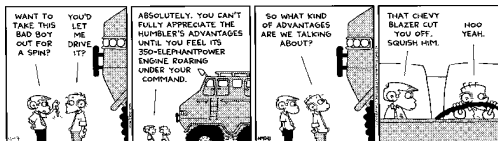


Better or Worse



Peanuts





Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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Across

- 1 Flavor enhancer
- 5 Frenzied
- 8 Break suddenly
- 12 Hodge-podge
- 13 Bobby of hockey
- 14 Dark purple
- 15 Lunch period, often
- 17 Shot
- 18 Bottled spirits?
- 19 Lustrous fabric
- 21 Grimalkin
- 22 Speak unclearly
- 23 Card-table call
- 26 Bumped into
- 28 "The Bell Jar" writer
- 31 Eagled a par-3
- 33 Eggnog ingredient
- 35 Coldhead

Down

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Ditty | 29 container |
| 2 Lotion additive | 30 — Aviv |
| 3 Father of the pride | 30 Attention getter |
| 4 Invigorant | 32 Unerring |
| 5 Less dry | 33 marksman |
| 6 Branch | 34 Island garb |
| 7 Apparel | 37 Right angle |
| 8 BBQ | 39 Luminary |
| 9 accessory | 42 Japanese fencing |
| 10 5 and 10, e.g. | 44 "Hi, Ho" |
| 11 Pinnales | 45 They're often connected |
| 11 Menial laborer | 46 Taj Mahal city |
| 12 Squad | 48 On |
| 20 Mattemhor or Jungfrau | 49 Comic-strip |
| 23 Diastema | 50 shriek |
| 24 Lemieux | 50 Low-pH |
| 25 milieu | 53 Historic |
| 25 Time, rival | 53 period |

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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| I | C | E | D | | A | D | O | | R | O | P | E | N |
| G | R | E | E | N | B | A | Y | | E | V | E | N | |
| H | E | R | | A | I | M | | F | E | A | S | T | |
| | | | G | I | N | | F | U | N | | | | |
| C | H | U | R | L | | L | A | R | C | E | N | Y | |
| P | U | R | E | S | E | X | | A | G | U | E | | |
| A | M | N | E | S | I | A | | F | R | O | N | T | |
| | | | N | O | D | | K | I | D | | | | |
| D | U | C | H | Y | | E | L | F | | E | K | E | |
| E | C | H | O | | G | R | E | E | N | D | A | Y | |
| A | L | A | R | | A | S | I | | O | G | R | E | |
| D | A | R | N | | P | E | N | | W | E | N | D | |

11-17

CRYPTOQUIP

B J K O K T K N B L D E K S
 N L T K M P D , K T P V K F C D
 T D C B P B Z V N F D C B D J N , B
 T D G U Z M B L ' S F D K
 F D T D I B G U

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN MOM WANTED HER TWIN BOYS TO COME IMMEDIATELY, SHE WOULD CRY "ON THE DOUBLE!"

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals E

Dress dollars probably down drain

Dear Abby: Some friends of ours, "Rhonda" and "Mike," planned to be married. They have no small children together. Mike is a longtime childhood friend of my husband's; we met Rhonda through Mike. Mike and Rhonda are no longer together. It was a messy breakup. They no longer speak to each other, and they even have relatives intercede in the exchange of their children so they don't have to see each other.

My husband and I gave Rhonda \$100 as a down payment on the wedding dress that she just "had" to have. Mike and Rhonda both thanked us, and said not to buy a wedding gift, that the money was given enough. Rhonda bought the dress and now plans to sell it.

My husband and I are not well-off, and we would like our money back. We feel that now the wedding has been canceled, the money should be returned. Rhonda has not offered to do it. Should we confront her and tell

her that when she sells the dress that it's the \$100 back? How should we handle this?

— **Want Our Money in Washington**

Dear Wants: *Kather* than "confront" Rhonda, remind her that when she sells the dress, you would like her to return the money. But don't hold your breath. Since your friendship was based on your long-standing friendship with Mike, she may assume that her relationship with you is history — and you feel inclined to do so.

Dear Abby: I have fallen in love with a wonderful man I'll call "Hank." Hank is everything I want in a man. We have been together for five months, and he is always very well-dressed — which is important to me. I take pride in the way I look and want my partner to do the same. Hank and I went out yesterday. It was cold outside and

Hank said he would wear a sweater. Well, Abby, the sweater looked like something he found in a trash bin! It was stained, dirty and faded. How do I tell Hank that sweater has to go without hurting his feelings? I felt embarrassed to be with him, which I had to admit to myself. How can I tell him not to wear it again?

— **Embarrassed in Illinois**

Dear Embarrassed: Do NOT tell him not to wear it again, or that you felt embarrassed to be seen with him in it. When an otherwise spiffy dresser wears a garment that is "old, stained, faded," etc., it is safe to assume that the item has sentimental value. Since you prefer that he wear something nicer, buy him a sweater or two — and as the weather grows colder, let him know how much it would please you to see him in something you selected especially for him.

Letters for this column — with your name and other numbers — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can email Abby on the Internet at <http://www.ueppress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

Dear Abby



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

GINOR

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Aragon



HOW SHE FINISHED THE LAUNDRY WHEN THE DRYER BROKE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: AWASH TYPED WHOLLY WAITER Answer: When the surfers saw the big waves, they said it was — WORTH THE "WADE"

Smoky neighbor a health hazard

Dear Annie: I have lived in a wonderful apartment for five years.

Three months ago, a woman who is a heavy smoker moved in downstairs.

Her smoke drifts into my apartment, even when I have my windows and patio door closed.

Last month, the smell was so bad, I went to her apartment to confront her. She apologized and promised to buy a smokeless ashtray, but nothing has changed. Also, she is a senior citizen, and I know it would be nearly impossible for her to quit.

I have gone to my doctor because the secondhand smoke is affecting my health. He put me on allergy medication, but I am still suffering.

I can feel the smoke burning in my throat and lungs. I am so concerned that I've started wearing a dust mask to filter out the smoke.

I have talked to the management office and was told there is nothing they can do. I also

Annie's Mailbox



checked my lease, and although there is a section regarding "nuisances," cigarette smoke isn't listed. Please help me. I am losing my patience and do not want to have a blow-up with this woman.

Do I have any legal rights to protect me against her cigarette smoke? I don't want to move. Can she be forced out?

— **Trouble Breathing in San Leandro, Calif.**

Dear San Leandro: No. There are no current laws, even in California, that prohibit someone from smoking inside her own apartment. Since you have a health condition, it's possible you can seek redress through the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission. Otherwise, try adding some ventilation to your own place, perhaps a filtration system, that will help you breathe easier. And start looking for another place soon, preferably one with a no-smoking policy.

Dear Annie: I am dating "Roger," a man I love very much. In the past, Roger has dated overly jealous women who cheated on him, and now I am living in their shadow. If he neglects to introduce me to someone and I ask who it is, he jumps to the conclusion that I am jealous. If I am late when we are scheduled to go somewhere, he will leave without me. However, if he is behind schedule and I call to see if he is on the way, he thinks I am checking up on him and becomes very angry.

Roger currently is not speaking to me because I called to ask where he was.

— **Confused in Freeport, Ill.**

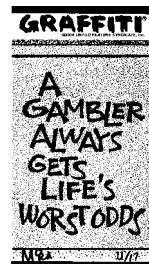
Dear Confused: It is unhealthy to walk on eggshells in a relationship because you fear upsetting them. Roger is insecure, childish, suspicious and inconsiderate. Get out while you can.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please email your questions to annie@mailbox.com, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

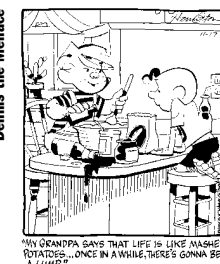
Family Circus



"Today we learned we live on a planet. Tomorrow I hope we'll find out which one."

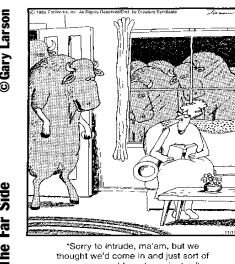


Dennis the Menace



© Gary Larson

The Far Side



Non Sequitur

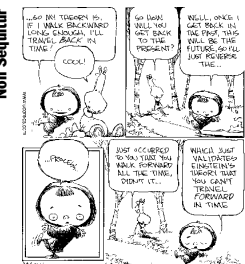




Photo courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau

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BCS gives slight edge to Oklahoma

By RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

Oklahoma remained second in the Bowl Championship Series standings Monday, holding off Auburn because of a stronger computer ranking.

Southern California is still No. 1 with a grade of 9808. Oklahoma's grade is .9621, and Auburn's is .9350.

Last week, the Sooners led the Tigers by .0567. Now, Oklahoma's lead is down to .0271.

The Tigers made up lots of ground on the Sooners in the polls on Sunday, tying Oklahoma for second in The Associated Press Top 25 and getting within two points of No. 2 in the coaches poll.

The polls each count for a third of a BCS grade. A compilation of six computer rankings make up the other third, and according to the computers Oklahoma is the best team in the country.

USC's second in the computer rankings and Auburn is third.

The top two teams in the final BCS standings, which will be released Dec. 5, play for the national title in the Orange Bowl on Jan. 4.

The Trojans, Sooners and Tigers are all 10-0.

| Bowl Championship Series standings | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|------|-------|----------|------|-------|----------|------|--------|-------|----|
| Nov. 15, 2004 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | AP | | | USA/ESPN | | | Computer | | | BCS | |
| | Rk | Pts | Pct | Rk | Pts | Pct | Rk | Pts | Pct | Avg | Pv |
| 1. Southern Cal | 12 | 1008 | .9808 | 2 | 1434 | .9928 | 1 | 1000 | 1.0000 | .9621 | 2 |
| 2. Oklahoma | 12 | 1536 | .9462 | 2 | 1435 | .9410 | 1 | 1000 | 1.0000 | .9621 | 2 |
| 3. Auburn | 12 | 1536 | .9462 | 2 | 1433 | .9397 | 3 | 92 | .9200 | .9393 | 4 |
| 4. California | 4 | 1409 | .8671 | 4 | 1311 | .8597 | 5 | 83 | .8300 | .8522 | 4 |
| 5. Texas | 6 | 1301 | .8006 | 6 | 1222 | .8013 | 4 | 84 | .8400 | .8140 | 5 |
| 6. Utah | 5 | 1316 | .8098 | 6 | 1203 | .7889 | 6 | 82 | .8200 | .8062 | 7 |
| 7. Michigan | 11 | 1279 | .7971 | 11 | 1191 | .7810 | 9 | 68 | .6800 | .6984 | 9 |
| 8. Florida St. | 10 | 1004 | .6178 | 8 | 999 | .6551 | 13 | 49 | .4900 | .5876 | 12 |
| 9. Boise St. | 13 | 791 | .4905 | 12 | 847 | .5423 | 8 | 72 | .7200 | .5943 | 10 |
| 10. Louisville | 8 | 1046 | .6437 | 11 | 889 | .5770 | 14 | 46 | .4600 | .5602 | 14 |
| 11. Georgia | 9 | 1012 | .6226 | 9 | 948 | .6216 | 10 | 62 | .6200 | .5476 | 8 |
| 12. Miami | 12 | 834 | .5132 | 13 | 774 | .5075 | 10 | 62 | .6200 | .5469 | 17 |
| 13. Wisconsin | 15 | 642 | .4511 | 15 | 688 | .4511 | 17 | 39 | .3900 | .4107 | 15 |
| 14. Arizona St. | 20 | 442 | .2720 | 21 | 441 | .2695 | 7 | 76 | .7600 | .4338 | 16 |
| 15. Virginia Tech | 11 | 731 | .4511 | 16 | 688 | .4511 | 17 | 39 | .3900 | .4107 | 15 |
| 16. LSU | 14 | 786 | .4837 | 14 | 771 | .5056 | 19 | 29 | .2900 | .4264 | 19 |
| 17. Tennessee | 11 | 723 | .4511 | 16 | 688 | .4511 | 17 | 39 | .3900 | .4107 | 15 |
| 18. Iowa | 17 | 626 | .3962 | 17 | 619 | .3403 | 11 | 51 | .5100 | .4139 | 20 |
| 19. Virginia | 18 | 541 | .3570 | 18 | 536 | .3570 | 21 | 36 | .3600 | .3971 | 11 |
| 20. Texas A&M | 22 | 274 | .1686 | 22 | 272 | .1784 | 12 | 50 | .5000 | .2823 | 21 |
| 21. Boston College | 19 | 499 | .3015 | 19 | 432 | .2839 | 5 | 86 | .8600 | .2152 | 22 |
| 22. Oklahoma St. | 23 | 223 | .1372 | 23 | 229 | .1502 | 20 | 28 | .2800 | .1891 | 22 |
| 23. West Virginia | 19 | 539 | .3015 | 19 | 432 | .2839 | 5 | 86 | .8600 | .2152 | 22 |
| 24. UTEP | 24 | 152 | .0935 | 25 | 87 | .0570 | 22 | 19 | .1900 | .1135 | 24 |
| 25. Bowling Green | 25 | 42 | .0258 | 24 | 117 | .0767 | NR | 0 | .0000 | .0242 | NR |

The BCS Average is calculated by averaging the percent totals of the Associated Press, USA Today/ESPN Coaches and Computer polls.

Auburn surged on the heels of its 24-6 victory over Southeastern Conference rival Georgia on Saturday. Oklahoma beat Nebraska 30-3, but appeared to be hurt in the polls by recent close calls against Oklahoma State and Texas A&M. The computers, however, have been partial to the Sooners' quality wins away from home in the Big 12 and strength of schedule.

California (.8522) is fourth,

Texas (.8140) is fifth and Utah (.8062) is back in the sixth spot, after slipping to seventh last week.

The unbeaten Utes are trying to become the first team to win a mid-major conference to earn a BCS bid. They can lock up a spot by finishing in the top six. Utah is .0568 ahead of seventh-place Michigan with a game to play against Mountain West Conference rival BYU on Saturday.

Bonds awarded seventh NL MVP

40-year-old wins for third straight year

By RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Barry Bonds won his record seventh NL MVP award in a walk.

Capping a season of suspicion and success, the San Francisco Giants' left fielder became the oldest player to win the award. The 40-year-old received 24 first-place votes and 407 points Monday in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America to earn the award for the fourth straight season.

Los Angeles third baseman Adrian Beltré was second, getting six first-place votes and 311 points. And St. Louis first baseman Albert Pujols was third with one and 247 points. St. Louis third baseman Scott Rolen got the other first-place vote and finished fourth, followed by teammate Jim Edmonds.

Bonds is the only player with more than three MVP awards and the only one to win more than two in a row. Willie Stargell was previously the oldest to win it, sharing the 1979 NL award with Keith Hernandez at 39½.

Among the four major North American professional sports, he trails only the NHL's Wayne Gretzky, who won nine MVPs. In the NBA, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar leads with six.

Bonds became only the third player to hit 700 career homers, and with 703 trails only Hank Aaron (755) and Babe Ruth (714).



Bonds

His personal trainer has been indicted for illegal distribution of steroids, but Bonds has denied using illegal steroids.

Bonds' season was unparalleled statistically. He hit .362 to win his second NL batting title in three seasons and shattered the major league record with a .609 on-base percentage, topping the previous mark of .582 he set two years ago.

He walked 232 times, 34 more than the previous record he set in 2002 and more than 100 better than anyone else in baseball this season, and his 120 intentional walks obliterated the old mark of 68, also set by Bonds in 2002.

Bonds' .812 slugging percentage led the major leagues for the fourth straight season but fell short of the record he set at .863 in 2001. He hit 45 homers and matched Aaron's NL record of eight 40-homer seasons, trailing only Ruth's major league mark of 19. He also became the first player in major league history with 13 consecutive 30-homer seasons.

Ruling clears way for Expos to move to D.C.

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Arbitrators ruled Monday against the former United Partners of the Montreal Expos in their case against former controlling owner Jeffrey Loria, clearing Major League Baseball to move the franchise to Washington.

Jeffrey Kessler, the lawyer for the limited partners, said they will drop their attempt to gain an injunction to block the move. Baseball owners are scheduled to vote on the relocation Thursday when they meet in Chicago.

The deal, subject to the District of Columbia approving financing for a new ballpark by Dec. 31, would be the first move of a major league baseball franchise since the expansion Washington Senators became the Texas Rangers after the 1971 season.

Daly-Donofrio cruises in LGPA's champions tournament

MOBILE, Ala. — Heather Daly-Donofrio cruised to a four-stroke win Sunday in the LGPA Tournament of Champions.

Sports briefs

ons, securing a three-year exemption on the LPGA Tour.

Daly-Donofrio wasn't supposed to be in the select field, but got in when tournament officials extended the eligibility criteria to include winners from 2001.

She shot a 70 to finish at 19-under 269. Laura Diaz birdied the last two holes to shoot 69 and finished second.

New York, four other cities submit bids for 2012 Games

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — The IOC received bids to host the 2012 Summer Olympics from London, Madrid, Moscow, New York and Paris.

Representatives from London and Madrid were at the International Olympic Committee's headquarters Monday to present their bids. The other three cities mailed their bids.

The host will be selected by the IOC in Singapore in July 2005.

CAREER CENTER

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NAMS

TRAINERS NEEDED

(Iwakuni, Sasebo, Yokosuka & bases in Guam) Dynamic U.S. Government contractor is seeking Part Time Career Transition Trainers at various U.S. military bases in both Japan and Guam. Trainer will provide 2-3 training seminars each month for military personnel entering the civilian job market. This is an excellent opportunity for spouses of military or DOD personnel. Applicants must have knowledge of U.S. labor market & experience in job search techniques. Previous experience in Training, Career Counseling, or HR is desirable. Military experience is strongly desired. Topics include: skill assessment, career decision-making, resume preparation, interview techniques, job search strategies, etc.

E-mail resume to ssauntry@namsinc.org or fax to (703) 821-3680. EOE.

SCOREBOARD

AFN-TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—NFL: Philadelphia (at Dallas) (td).

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—NBA: Utah (at Charlotte).

AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.—Tennis: ATP Masters Cup, Day 2.

AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.—Auto racing: NASCAR Nextel Cup, Southern 500 (at Dover).

AFN-Sports, 11 p.m.—College football: Ohio (at Purdue) (td).

Thursday

AFN-Atlanta, 5 a.m.—Auto racing: NASCAR Toyota All-Star Showdown (td).

AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.—NFL: Atlanta (at Milwaukee).

AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.—Tennis: ATP Masters Cup, Day 3 (td).

AFN-Sports, 11 p.m.—NBA: Miami (at Milwaukee) (td).

All times Japan and Korea Standard time did indicates delayed broadcast. All listings are subject to change. Some radio broadcasts not available in all areas. Visit www.afn.net for more information.

College football

AP Top 25

The Top 25 teams in the AP Associated Press college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Nov. 13, total points scored and points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote, and previous ranking:

| | Record | Pts | Pts |
|----------------------|--------|-------|-----|
| 1. Southern Cal (51) | 10-0 | 1,536 | 3 |
| 2. Auburn (6) | 10-0 | 1,435 | 2 |
| 3. Michigan (6) | 10-0 | 1,435 | 2 |
| 4. California | 10-1 | 1,409 | 5 |
| 5. Texas | 10-1 | 1,361 | 6 |
| 6. Texas | 9-1 | 1,301 | 6 |
| 7. Louisville | 9-1 | 1,279 | 12 |
| 8. Wisconsin | 9-1 | 1,012 | 12 |
| 9. Georgia | 9-1 | 1,012 | 12 |
| 10. Georgia | 8-2 | 879 | 8 |
| 11. Georgia | 8-2 | 879 | 8 |
| 12. Alabama | 8-2 | 879 | 8 |
| 13. Tennessee | 9-0 | 797 | 14 |
| 14. Tennessee | 7-3 | 733 | 15 |
| 15. Tennessee | 7-3 | 733 | 15 |
| 16. Iowa | 8-2 | 626 | 19 |
| 17. Iowa | 8-2 | 626 | 19 |
| 18. Boston College | 7-2 | 490 | 21 |
| 19. Arizona | 8-2 | 430 | 21 |
| 20. Arizona | 8-2 | 430 | 21 |
| 21. Texas A&M | 7-3 | 274 | 22 |
| 22. Texas A&M | 7-3 | 274 | 22 |
| 23. UTEP | 7-2 | 152 | 23 |
| 24. UTEP | 7-2 | 152 | 23 |

Others receiving votes: Pittsburgh 31; Georgia Tech 21; Florida 11; Arkansas 8; Purdue 5; Texas Tech 5; Toledo 4; UCLA 4; Auburn 3; North Carolina 3; Miami 3; Michigan State 1; Navy 1; Texas 1; Mexico 1.

USA Today/ESPN Top 25

The top 25 teams in the USA Today-ESPN college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Nov. 13, points based on 25 points for a first-place vote, through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking:

| | Record | Pts | Pts |
|----------------------|--------|-------|-----|
| 1. Southern Cal (51) | 10-0 | 1,514 | 1 |
| 2. Oklahoma (6) | 10-0 | 1,435 | 2 |
| 3. Auburn (6) | 10-0 | 1,435 | 2 |
| 4. Michigan (6) | 10-0 | 1,435 | 2 |
| 5. Texas | 10-1 | 1,222 | 7 |
| 6. Texas | 10-1 | 1,222 | 7 |
| 7. Wisconsin | 9-1 | 1,191 | 9 |
| 8. Florida State | 9-2 | 999 | 12 |
| 9. Michigan | 9-1 | 948 | 4 |
| 10. Boise State | 8-2 | 847 | 5 |
| 11. Boise State | 8-2 | 847 | 5 |
| 12. Georgia | 9-0 | 827 | 13 |
| 13. Miami (FL) | 7-2 | 774 | 14 |
| 14. LSU | 7-2 | 771 | 15 |
| 15. Virginia Tech | 7-2 | 771 | 15 |
| 16. Tennessee | 7-2 | 580 | 18 |
| 17. Tennessee | 7-2 | 580 | 18 |
| 18. Virginia | 7-2 | 501 | 11 |
| 19. Virginia | 7-2 | 501 | 11 |
| 20. West Virginia | 8-2 | 419 | 10 |
| 21. Arizona State | 8-2 | 411 | 20 |
| 22. Arizona State | 8-2 | 411 | 20 |
| 23. Oklahoma State | 7-3 | 229 | 24 |
| 24. Bowling Green | 7-2 | 117 | 25 |
| 25. Texas-E Paso | 7-2 | 117 | 25 |

Others receiving votes: Texas Tech 7; Michigan State 6; Georgia Tech 5; Fresno State 4; Purdue 3; Navy 3; UCLA 3; Michigan State 2; Florida 2; Pittsburgh 3; Iowa 2; Memphis 2; Colorado 1; Alabama 1.

NCAA Division II playoffs

Second Round

Carson-Newman (9-2) at Valdosta State (9-1)
Texas A&M-Kingsville (9-1) at North-Western State (10-1)
Middle Tennessee (12-2) at Pittsburg State (11-2)

North Dakota (9-2) at Michigan Tech (9-1)
Idaho State (9-2) at Shippensburg (9-1)
Edinboro (9-2) at East Stroudsburg (9-1)

North Dakota (10-1) at Albany State, Ga. (10-0)

NCAA Division III playoffs

First Round

St. Norbert (9-1) at Wisconsin-La Crosse (9-1)

Williamette, Ore. (7-3) at Occidental, Calif. (9-1)
Worthington, Iowa (8-2) at Concordia-Moorhead (10-0)

Marquette, Mich. (9-2) at Hobart, N.Y. (8-1)
Muhlenberg, Pa. (8-2) at St. John Fisher, N.Y. (8-1)

Shenandoah, Va. (7-3) at Delaware Valley, Pa. (9-1)

Mary Hardin-Baylor (9-1) at Trinity, Texas (9-1)

Christopher Newport, Va. (8-2) at Salisbury, Md. (10-0)

Edgewood, Va. (8-2) at Washington Jefferson, Pa. (10-0)

St. Joseph, Mo. (9-2) at Wheaton, Ill. (10-0)

Portage, Wis. (9-1) at Alma, Mich. (8-2)
Aurora, Ill. (6-4) at Wooster, Ohio (10-0)

Auto racing

Mountain Dew Southern 500

Sunday

At Darlington Raceway
Darlington, S.C.
Lap length: 1.366 miles
(Starting position in parentheses)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. (4) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, 367, 114:02.5 | 2. (5) Mark Martin, Ford, 367, 119:02.5 | 3. (2) Jeff Gordon, Chevrolet, 367, 119:02.5 | 4. (1) Kurt Busch, Dodge, 367, 119:02.5 |
| 5. (13) Casey Kasch, Dodge, 367, 129:50.6 | 6. (12) Jeff Green, Dodge, 367, 129:50.6 | 7. (10) Tony Stewart, Chevrolet, 365, 129:50.6 | 8. (18) Joe Nemechek, Chevrolet, 367, 130:52.2 |
| 9. (15) Bobby Labonte, Chevrolet, 367, 130:52.2 | 10. (30) Mike Bliss, Chevrolet, 367, 130:52.2 | 11. (24) Earl Bamhart Jr., Chevrolet, 367, 130:52.2 | 12. (20) Sterling Marlin, Dodge, 367, 130:52.2 |
| 13. (12) Jeff Burton, Chevrolet, 367, 130:52.2 | 14. (32) Jeff Green, Dodge, 367, 130:52.2 | 15. (22) Tony Stewart, Chevrolet, 365, 130:52.2 | 16. (16) Ricky Rudd, Ford, 367, 130:52.2 |
| 17. (24) Earl Bamhart Jr., Chevrolet, 367, 130:52.2 | 18. (10) Rusty Mayfield, Dodge, 365, 130:52.2 | 19. (20) Matt Kenseth, Ford, 365, 130:52.2 | 20. (21) Matt Kenseth, Ford, 365, 130:52.2 |
| 21. (20) Matt Kenseth, Ford, 365, 130:52.2 | 22. (30) Scott Wimmer, Dodge, 365, 130:52.2 | 23. (8) Elliott Stryker, Ford, 365, 130:52.2 | 24. (30) Greg Biffle, Ford, 365, 130:52.2 |
| 25. (31) Scott Riggs, Chevrolet, 364, 130:52.2 | 26. (22) Casey Mears, Dodge, 364, 130:52.2 | 27. (27) Brendan Gaughan, Dodge, 364, 130:52.2 | 28. (30) Terry Labonte, Chevrolet, 364, 130:52.2 |
| 29. (24) Johnny Sauter, Chevrolet, 363, 130:52.2 | 30. (31) Ken Schrader, Chevrolet, 362, 130:52.2 | 31. (35) Bobby Hamilton Jr., Chevrolet, 367, 131:54.2 | 32. (14) Kevin Harvick, Chevrolet, 364, 130:52.2 |
| 33. (17) Michael Waltrip, Chevrolet, 364, 130:52.2 | 34. (7) Ryan Newman, Dodge, 363, 130:52.2 | 35. (4) Kyle Petty, Ford, 360, 130:52.2 | 36. (39) Randy LaJoie, Ford, 262, 130:52.2 |
| 37. (32) Dale Jarrett, Ford, 194, accident, 84:02.5 | 38. (17) Mike Wallace, Chevrolet, 180, oil pump, 95:35.0 | 39. (38) Todd Bodine, Dodge, 143, accident, 95:37.5 | 40. (41) Hermie Sadler, Chevrolet, 130, handling, 95:37.5 |
| 41. (41) Hermie Sadler, Chevrolet, 130, handling, 95:37.5 | 42. (41) Hermie Sadler, Chevrolet, 130, handling, 95:37.5 | 43. (41) Hermie Sadler, Chevrolet, 130, handling, 95:37.5 | 44. (41) Hermie Sadler, Chevrolet, 130, handling, 95:37.5 |

Winner's average speed: 125.04 mph.
Time of race: 4 hours, 9 minutes, 39 seconds.

Margin of victory: 0.59 seconds.

Caution flags for 11 laps.

Lead changes: 18 times by 13 drivers.

Lap leaders: K. Busch 1; A. Mears 2; M. Waltrip 3; B. Hamilton 4; J. Green 5; J. Nemechek 6; G. Biffle 6-45; M. Martin 46-59; T. Bodine 60-75; W. Carroll 76-87; R. LaJoie 88-101; M. Waltrip 102-112; M. Waltrip 113-120; K. Busch 121-127; R. Gordon 128-136; J. Johnson 139-145; M. Martin 146; J. Johnson 147-195; M. Martin 196-210.

College basketball

M. Kenneth 197; J. Gordon 196-250; M. Martin 251-252; J. Gordon 254-317; J. Johnson 318-339; M. Kenneth 340-341; J. Johnson 342-343; J. Johnson 344-345; J. Johnson 346-347; J. Johnson 348-349; J. Johnson 350-351; J. Johnson 352-353; J. Johnson 354-355; J. Johnson 356-357; J. Johnson 358-359; J. Johnson 360-361; J. Johnson 362-363; J. Johnson 364-365; J. Johnson 366-367; J. Johnson 368-369; J. Johnson 370-371; J. Johnson 372-373; J. Johnson 374-375; J. Johnson 376-377; J. Johnson 378-379; J. Johnson 380-381; J. Johnson 382-383; J. Johnson 384-385; J. Johnson 386-387; J. Johnson 388-389; J. Johnson 390-391; J. Johnson 392-393; J. Johnson 394-395; J. Johnson 396-397; J. Johnson 398-399; J. Johnson 400-401; J. Johnson 402-403; J. Johnson 404-405; J. Johnson 406-407; J. Johnson 408-409; J. Johnson 410-411; J. Johnson 412-413; J. Johnson 414-415; J. Johnson 416-417; J. Johnson 418-419; J. Johnson 420-421; J. Johnson 422-423; J. Johnson 424-425; J. Johnson 426-427; J. Johnson 428-429; J. 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WBA heavyweight champion John Ruiz, left, and Andrew Golota clutched and grabbed for 12 rounds.



Former champ Evan Holyfield, right, now 42, was no match for light-hitting Ruiz, Donald on Saturday.

Fighting a losing battle

Saturday night's dreadful fight card revealed a heavyweight division in need of a champion

By the time Andrew Golota and John Ruiz began their ugliness, it was Sunday morning and some in the crowd at Madison Square Garden had so much to drink that they were fighting among themselves.

Tim Dahlberg



Want to know what's wrong with the heavyweight division these days? Look no further than what took place on this chilly fall night in New York City.

Two reigning champions, three former champions and a bunch of guys who dream of being a champion were brought together by King to fight what would be a total of 50 rounds with two major titles at stake.

You might have thought the night would begin to sort out a division that claims four champions, any three of whom you'd be hard pressed to name.

You would have thought wrong.

The televised card began on a bad note, when Evander Holyfield's pathetic quest to win the undisputed heavyweight title exposed him once again as a 42-year-old whose reflexes are shot even though his body looks every bit as good as when he made his pro debut 20 years earlier in the same building.

The crowd tried to urge Holyfield on, chanting his name half-heartedly a few times as journeyman Larry Donald did everything to Holyfield but convince him to retire.

"In my mind I can't realistically think that it's over," Holyfield said. "But I have to look at the possibility that this is a permanent problem. If this is going to hap-

pen every fight, I can't continue to do it."

At least Holyfield has a proud past to look back on. He won the heavyweight title four times, was an undisputed champion and conquered Mike Tyson.

The fighters who followed him Saturday night can make no such claims.

Hasim Rahman was a one-punch wonder who lost just as quickly on another punch, and now he's in line for a shot at one of the titles after beating up a former rugby player from New Zealand by the name of Kalli Mehan.

That set the stage for the first title fight of the night, with under-sized IBF champion Chris Byrd taking on the oversized friend, Jameel McCline. Byrd got

knocked down in the second round and took some early punishment before rallying to win a split decision that did nothing to bolster his claim as a true champion.

The worst was saved for last, though, when Ruiz and Golota engaged in a 12-round fiasco that had all the skill and finesse of a 34th Street mugging. Ruiz ended up winning, though it was his buffoonish trainer, Norman Stone, who provided the most entertainment when he threw a punch at Golota's trainer and then was ejected for throwing some tape at the referee.

By the end, even the drunks in the upper seats had got fighting, resigned perhaps to the fact the evening had nearly come and gone and they still hadn't seen a heavyweight who was more than just a pretender to the crown.

Part of that can be blamed on King, who has locked up almost any heavyweight who can figure out how to lace up his boots. King won't risk his fighters losing titles to anyone he doesn't have options on, which is why he resurrected Golota from boxing's graveyard and gave him title fights in successive bouts against Byrd and Ruiz.

Perhaps the best fighter in New

York over the weekend didn't fight at all. WBC champion Vitali Klitschko was there to have lunch with some writers, declare he would fight anyone, and then explain in the same breath why he's defending his title against one-shot wonder Danny Williams next month.

The truth is, there is no Ali, Foreman or Frazier among this bunch. There's not even a Tyson, though Tyson will likely take his freak show on the road again in March if he can find a stiff who is so bad he can beat him.

There are, however, some decent fighters in the group, though all operate under some handicaps. Byrd is too small, Ruiz fights too ugly, Rahman is too quirky and Klitschko is too slow.

They all have one thing in common, though. None of them can sell a ticket, which is why the Garden's balcony section was empty. Saturday night despite King's heavy promotion of this ton of heavyweight fights.

For that to change, someone has to take a chance and the champions have to start fighting each other.

What is left of a boxing public not yet alienated by multiple champions and weight divisions craves an undisputed heavyweight champion.

Let's begin by tossing the WBO version of the belt in the trash, where it belongs. Lamont Brewster is a nice guy, but he's done nothing to earn being called a heavyweight champion.

Next, have Ruiz fight Byrd. It may not be pretty, but at least boxing fans wouldn't have to sit through another night where both defend titles.

At some point, if Klitschko hasn't been exposed by then as a one-dimensional fighter, they can get together and unify the titles.

Just do us one favor: Whatever happens, don't let Holyfield have any part of it.

Tim Dahlberg is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at: tddahlberg@ap.org

S. Williams earns shot at revenge against Sharapova

BY BETH HARRIS

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES—Serena Williams pretended she couldn't remember playing Maria Sharapova in the Wimbledon final, amnesia being a convenient way of forgetting her one-sided loss.

"I don't know who it was," she said, half serious and half smiling. "I wasn't at Wimbledon this year."

The Russian trounced Williams 6-1, 6-4 for her first Grand Slam title at 17, a victory that propelled Sharapova to worldwide stardom and turned her blonde sex appeal into a lucrative off-court industry.

Williams won't be able to pretend Monday night, when she plays Sharapova in the final of the season-end WTA Championships. The winner will receive \$1 million, and a car to donate to her favorite charity.

Williams won the tournament in 2001 and was second in 2002, while Sharapova is playing for the first time. Sharapova is ranked sixth, and Williams is eighth.

"She obviously is going to want her revenge," Sharapova said. "Hey, I'm in the finals of the championships, and I want it, too."

Williams will try to salvage a season that, by her definition, wasn't the best.

She won two titles, but no Grand Slams. She skipped the Australian Open while rehabilitating her knee, then had quarterfinal losses to Jennifer Capriati at both the French and U.S. Opens and lost Wimbledon after beating Amelie Mauresmo in a three-set semifinal.

On Sunday in the semifinals, Williams outlasted Mauresmo 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-4, and Sharapova beat Anastasia Myskina 2-6, 6-2, 6-2 for the first time after losing to her countrywoman three other times this year.

Mauresmo's loss guaranteed Lindsay Davenport will retain the top spot when the year-end WTA rankings are released Tuesday. The Frenchwoman had to win the tournament to topple Davenport, who failed to advance to the semifinals. Davenport also ended the year No. 1 in 1998 and 2001.

Mauresmo failed to convert any of her 12 break points in the third set, when Williams hit winners on 10 of them.

"I felt like I forced her to play her best level and really make some passing shots and make some unbelievable saves," said Mauresmo, whose 11-match winning streak ended.

Mauresmo had six break points in the fourth game, but Williams held at 2-all. Williams outlasted Mauresmo in a 13-deuce, 32-point game to hold for a 5-3 lead.

"It was definitely intense," Williams said. "Amelie was playing some good shots and getting the balls back. Finally, I was able to just do it. It was really hard. She started coming to the net a bit more and she was taking some pace off the ball. Then I just decided to go for it."



Maria Sharapova reacts after winning a game against Anastasia Myskina during the semifinals of the WTA Tour Championships. She plays Serena Williams in the final.

Dooling helps rescue Heat in

By TIM REYNOLDS

The Associated Press

MIAMI — There probably will be games this season when Shaquille O'Neal's dismal free-throw shooting plays a critical role in a Miami Heat loss.

It nearly happened Sunday.

O'Neal missed 12 of his 17 attempts from the line, yet Miami — playing without Dwyane Wade, out again with a sprained left ankle — managed to hold off the Milwaukee Bucks 112-110 in double overtime.

"Am I worried about it? No," O'Neal said. "I don't worry about it. I didn't shoot well from the line tonight, but my other guys stuck up for me. They just need to know that when they really, really need me, I'll be there. I wasn't there today, but I'll be there when they need me."

O'Neal had 19 points and 18 rebounds to help the Heat improve to 5-2 and tie the Indi-

ana for the best start in the Eastern Conference.

Miami's Keyon Dooling forced a second overtime with a running layup with 1.4 seconds left in the first extra session, keying what turned into a 11-0 Heat run that doomed Milwaukee's three-game winning streak.

O'Neal had his third straight double-double for Miami, which snapped a two-game losing streak in dramatic fashion. He helped stopped Milwaukee's fourth-quarter momentum with two late baskets, first following up his own missed one-handed dunk with a two-handed jam that brought Miami to 85-84, then a turnaround shot that put the Heat ahead 86-85 with 3 minutes left in regulation.

Plus, he took charges, had four assists and blocked four shots in a season-high 42 minutes.

"I'll take 19 points from Shaq in 42 min-

utes of play every time we play him," said Bucks coach Terry Porter, who resorted to the Hack-a-Shaq fouling scheme on one possession in the fourth quarter. O'Neal made one of the two free throws on that trip. "Our guys did a good job... He's a lot of man to guard."

But O'Neal — whose free-throw percentage for the season is down to 36.8 percent, low even by his abysmal career standards — missed all three of his foul-line chances in the first overtime. He got bailed out by Dooling's running layup with 1.4 seconds remaining that sent the game to another extra period.

"What he needs is a belief in his technique, but because he hasn't been a good free throw shooter, when a couple don't go in his technique changes," Heat coach Stan Van Gundy said. "I'm not telling you he's going to shoot 90 percent. I'm telling you that he can shoot 60 percent if he sticks with what he's doing."



Heat guard Keyon Dooling (5) jumps into the arms of Damon Jones after Dooling tied the game at the end of the first overtime against the Bucks. Miami won in double OT.

Kings finding comfort at home

The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — After a slow start, the Sacramento Kings are beginning to look more like themselves at home.

Brad Miller had 26 points and nine rebounds, and the Kings earned their second straight win at home by beating the Denver Nuggets 101-89 Sunday night.

The Kings opened the season by losing four of five games, the only win a lopsided decision at home against Toronto. Sacramento won its first road game on Saturday in Phoenix before returning home to knock off the Nuggets.

"This is Sacramento, we don't lose at home," Miller said.

"We've won two in a row and hopefully that has kind of us around. When we move the ball and play our game, we're still tough to beat."

Miller, an All-Star the past two seasons, made seven of eight shots from the field — including both three-point attempts — and 10 of 11 free throws.

He scored 11 points in the third quarter as the Kings stretched their lead to 77-63. The advantage stayed in double figures through much of the fourth quarter as Denver lost its 16th straight game in Sacramento, dating to Jan. 7, 1996.

"They are always one of the best home teams in the league and they're just outplayed us," Denver guard Eric Boykins said.

Veja Stojakovic had 22 points, Mike Bibby scored 20, and Darus Songalia added 10 for Sacramento, which has four games remaining on its homestand.

"This feels good right now [at home] and we have four more to go," Stojakovic said. "I feel like the rest of the month should be good for us."

The homestand got off to a good start despite a lack of production from Chris Webber, who was in foul trouble and finished with 10 points and nine rebounds.

Webber had three first-half



Kings center Brad Miller shoots over Nuggets defender Bryon Russell during the second half. Miller had 26 points on 7-of-8 shooting.

shots and picked up a fourth early in the third quarter. He stayed out of the game until the final period.

Denver never got going offensively. The Nuggets missed continually from outside and never found the going easy on the inside, either, shooting 38 percent.

Carmelo Anthony provided the only consistent production for Denver, scoring 28 points and grabbing six rebounds. However, he was 10-of-23 and had three turnovers.

"He's tough to cover, he's very physical," said Stojakovic, who guarded Anthony. "If you guard him close he will just go by you. I received a lot of help. I think we forced him to take some tough

shots."

Rodney White had 14 points, and Kenyon Martin and DeMar Johnson each had 11.

"There's no excuses in this league, you've got to be able to shoot the basketball," Denver coach Jeff Bzdelick said.

Bibby scored 14 points in the first half for the Kings.

SuperSonics 118, Grizzlies 113: At Seattle, Ray Allen scored a season-high 34 points and the SuperSonics overcame a 21-point deficit for their sixth consecutive victory.

Anthony Daniels added 28 points for the Sonics, undefeated since an opening-night loss to the Los Angeles Clippers. Paul Gasol led Memphis with 25 points.

NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference

| Atlantic Division | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Boston | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| New York | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Washington | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Charlotte | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Atlanta | 1 | 4 | .200 |

| Southeast Division | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Miami | 2 | 3 | .400 |
| Orlando | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Washington | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Charlotte | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Atlanta | 1 | 4 | .200 |

| Central Division | | | |
|------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Indiana | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Milwaukee | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Cleveland | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Chicago | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Detroit | 3 | 2 | .600 |

Western Conference

| Southwest Division | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| San Antonio | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Phoenix | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Memphis | 2 | 3 | .400 |
| New Orleans | 2 | 3 | .400 |

| Northwest Division | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Seattle | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Utah | 2 | 3 | .400 |
| Minnesota | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Portland | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Denver | 3 | 2 | .600 |

| Pacific Division | | | |
|------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Phoenix | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Clippers | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Lakers | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Golden State | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Golden State | 1 | 4 | .200 |

| Sunday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Monday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Golden State 121, Cleveland 104 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Houston at New Jersey | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Tuesday's games | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Utah at Chicago | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Seattle at Philadelphia | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Houston at Atlanta | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami at Minnesota | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| New York at San Antonio | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Phoenix at Dallas | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Chicago at Sacramento | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto at L.A. Clippers | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Utah at Indiana | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Atlanta at Atlanta | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Minnesota at Detroit | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Dallas at New Jersey | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Phoenix at New Orleans | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto at Denver | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Chicago at Golden State | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Wednesday's games | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Atlanta at Atlanta | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Boston at Washington | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Minnesota at Detroit | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Dallas at New Jersey | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Phoenix at New Orleans | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto at Denver | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Chicago at Golden State | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Thursday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Friday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Saturday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

76ers, Magic 87

| Atlantic Division | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Boston | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| New York | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Washington | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Charlotte | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Atlanta | 1 | 4 | .200 |

| Southeast Division | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Miami | 2 | 3 | .400 |
| Orlando | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Washington | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Charlotte | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Atlanta | 1 | 4 | .200 |

| Central Division | | | |
|------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Indiana | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Milwaukee | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Cleveland | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Chicago | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Detroit | 3 | 2 | .600 |

| Western Conference | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| San Antonio | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Phoenix | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Memphis | 2 | 3 | .400 |
| New Orleans | 2 | 3 | .400 |

| Northwest Division | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Seattle | 1 | 4 | .200 |
| Utah | 2 | 3 | .400 |
| Minnesota | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Portland | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Denver | 3 | 2 | .600 |

| Pacific Division | | | |
|------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Phoenix | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Clippers | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Lakers | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Golden State | 3 | 2 | .600 |
| Golden State | 1 | 4 | .200 |

| Sunday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Monday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Golden State 121, Cleveland 104 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Houston at New Jersey | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Tuesday's games | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Utah at Chicago | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Seattle at Philadelphia | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Houston at Atlanta | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami at Minnesota | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| New York at San Antonio | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Phoenix at Dallas | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Chicago at Sacramento | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto at L.A. Clippers | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Utah at Indiana | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Atlanta at Atlanta | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Minnesota at Detroit | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Dallas at New Jersey | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Phoenix at New Orleans | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto at Denver | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Chicago at Golden State | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Wednesday's games | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Atlanta at Atlanta | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Boston at Washington | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Minnesota at Detroit | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Dallas at New Jersey | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Phoenix at New Orleans | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Toronto at Denver | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Chicago at Golden State | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Thursday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Friday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

| Saturday's games | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| | W | L | Pct |
| Dallas 122, Washington 113 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Philadelphia 96, Orlando 89 | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| Miami 112, Milwaukee 110, 2OT | 4 | 1 | .800 |
| San Antonio 111, Sacramento 101 | 4 | 1 | .800 |

New scoring system will return in 2005

NASCAR chairman France pleased with changes

BY JENNA FRYER

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NASCAR chairman Brian France will keep the new Nextel Cup points system in place next year, satisfied that the closest championship race in history is proof that the 10-race playoff structure works better than expected.

Five drivers head into Sunday's finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway separated by 82 points, creating a one-race shootout to crown the Nextel Cup champion.

"The new points system has been wonderful, it's created interest and a scenario that was uninteresting under the old system," France told The Associated Press.

"Obviously, we were hoping to create drama all the way down to the last lap of the last race. That was our preference under the old system, and it just wasn't happening."

"So we like things the way they are. We always said we wanted to let the full year play out, but the balance we have now, we're real happy with. We may end up making some slight adjustments next season, but nothing very noticeable."

That's because the last time a points race was this close heading into the final event was 1992, when six drivers were separated by 113 points. Davey Allison led the points race with a 30-point lead over Alan Kulwicki. Kulwicki passed him and won the title.



Since then, the championship races have been snoozers.

Matt Kenseth clinched his title the week before the finale last season, and had more or less locked it up weeks before then.

Although other drivers were mathematically eligible to catch him, it would have taken a total collapse or an injury for Kenseth to lose the title.

So France entered his first season as NASCAR chairman with a radical new 10-race playoff system, in which the top 10 drivers after 26 events had their point totals reset and were the only ones eligible for the championship.

The system has had opponents since it was announced, and critics are still finding faults. The biggest complaint was the theory that one bad finish would ruin a driver's title hopes.

France said Jimmie Johnson has proved that wrong. After dropping to ninth in the standings with six races left, Johnson has used four victories to pull into second place, 18 points behind leader Kurt Busch.

"Everybody thought Jimmie Johnson was out, he had three bad races and everybody said you couldn't have one," France said.

"Well, nobody thought about the way to climb back into races. That is to win. That is exactly what we wanted."

So forget about a points system with a points system, which is what driver Jeremy Mayfield has lobbied for.

His title hopes were crushed in the first playoff race when he was caught in an accident Robby Gordon intentionally caused.

Because all 10 Chase drivers are scored on the same points system as everyone else, he got points for finishing 35th in that event. He argued he should have gotten points for finishing ninth out of the 10 Chase drivers.

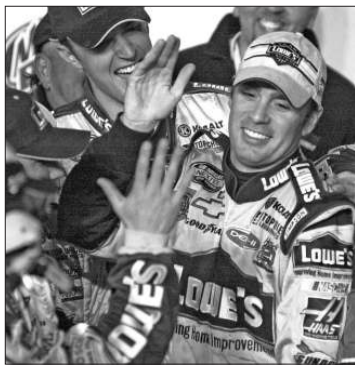
France listened to the idea, but said it isn't under consideration.

"We're heading away from that — not that down the road it won't have more appeal, but right now, Jimmie is showing you can have a bad race," he said. "We like the fact that we have put an emphasis on coming back and making up ground ... we like the dynamics of that."

France also said he is not going to award extra points to a race winner.

Under the current scoring system: A victory earns 180 points, a last-place finish gets 34 points. Five-point bonuses are given to any driver who leads a lap, and an additional five-point bonus is awarded for leading the most laps in a race.

France is particularly pleased with what the Chase has done for television ratings. Part of the reason



Jimmie Johnson, center, won the Mountain Dew Southern 500 on Sunday in Darlington, S.C., his fourth victory in five races. Johnson is one of four drivers within 82 points of leader Kurt Busch heading into next week's Nextel Cup finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

he wanted the new system was to create drama that could match up with the NFL and baseball playoffs.

Although NBC's ratings didn't move at first, they've been climbing for most of the season. The race in Atlanta three weeks ago was up 21 percent from last year, and NASCAR expects the Miami finale to post similar numbers.

It couldn't come at a better time for France, who is just starting to renegotiate NASCAR's television package. He said he was impressed with the \$8 billion extension the NFL worked out last week with CBS and Fox.

NASCAR has a \$2.8 billion deal with NBC and Fox that they signed in 2001 and expires at the end of the 2006 season.

Busch enters finale clinging to narrow points lead

BY JENNA FRYER

The Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Kurt Busch has spun out, blown an engine and raced a car that drove more like a bulldozer. No matter what the circumstances, none has been bad enough to cost him his points lead.

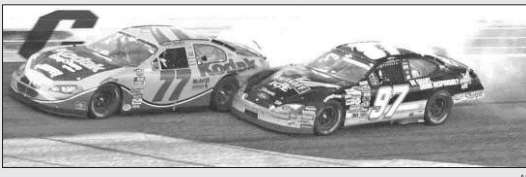
Busch battled an ill-handling car throughout the Southern 500 on Sunday, but still eked out a sixth-place finish. He left Darlington Raceway with his lead intact, and heads into next week's season finale with an 18-point advantage over Jimmie Johnson.

Four drivers are within striking distance of Busch, with 82 points separating first place through fifth.

"This is what we have won with the points structure, a playoff system where everybody is on edge, everybody has to make those split-second decisions and drive the same way," Busch said.

"There's no real template on what to do because this has never been done before."

If there's no template, then whatever plan Busch and his Roush Racing team are following should be the model for every team to use.



Kurt Busch (97) collides with Brendan Gaughan (77) during Sunday's NASCAR race in Darlington, S.C. Busch finished sixth and held onto his Nextel Cup points lead despite battling an ill-handling car all day.

Everything that could wrong has gone wrong for Busch during NASCAR's new 10-race playoff format.

He spun out and nearly wrecked in Kansas, yet still finished sixth. He wrecked on the first lap at Charlotte, drove through all and had to slide through the grass to avoid a catastrophic accident, yet still wound up fourth.

The engine on the No. 97 Ford blew up in Atlanta, and he ended up 42nd for his only finish outside the top 10 in a Chase race.

Last week he spun out twice at Phoenix, and seemed headed for

a miserable day at Darlington when the hanging on his car went away shortly after the start of the race.

As the sun went down, Busch lost sight of the cars around him on the track and ran into Brendan Gaughan to cause fender damage.

Still, his crew worked hard all day to keep his car competitive and salvage his spot on top of the standings.

"That's what it takes for any team to win a championship — to prosper from a horrible day," Busch said. "We feel as if we dodged a bullet."

But there's still more work to do.

The points race between the top five drivers — Jeff Gordon is 21 back, Dale Earnhardt Jr. is 72 back and Mark Martin is 82 out — is the closest in the modern era. And the 18-point difference between Busch and Johnson is the third closest.

Car owner Jack Roush wants his driver to stay grounded.

"It's his to lose," Roush said. "I told everybody that we expect to win and hope to win, but we've got to prepare to lose and how we're going to deal with the frustration of having it all go upside-down after it's been so good for so long."

Qualifying to be revamped next season

The Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — A new post-qualifying procedure designed to save money and significantly alter racing weekends will begin next season in NASCAR.

Car owner Jack Roush said he and his crew chiefs were briefed on the measures Saturday at Darlington Raceway. NASCAR is expected to announce the plans this week.

Under the plan, qualifying would be moved from Friday to Saturday, then the cars would be impounded. They would then line up Sundays with no tire, gear or shock absorber changes.

NASCAR chairman Brian France said the plans are still under consideration. If implemented, France said "time is the cost" they'll be helping teams save.

Roush said it was a "watershed" change for Nextel Cup. "I think it will save the teams money. I think it will result in at least as good if not more exciting racing and we'll look back at it after we've done it for a while like, 'Wow, why had we done it any other way,'" he said. "It's all good news."

Giants go with Manning; Miami taps Feeley

The Associated Press

The New York Giants and Miami Dolphins, teams struggling under the direction of veteran quarterbacks, have decided to go with a new look.

In New York, the Giants decided that rookie Eli Manning will replace Kurt Warner. Miami, meanwhile, will start backup A.J. Feeley in place of Jay Fiedler.

Giants coach Tom Coughlin made the move to Manning on Monday after Warner and the offense struggled for the second consecutive week in a 17-14 loss to the Cardinals in Arizona. The Giants (5-4) have lost three of the last four games after opening 4-1.

Manning, the top pick in this year's draft and the brother of Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning, will face the Atlanta Falcons on Sunday at Giants Stadium.

"He [Eli Manning] is the future of the New York Giants. It just starts now. ... He is excited about the opportunity to compete and lead."

"He is the future of the New York Giants. It just starts now," Coughlin said of Manning, who lost a close training camp competition with Warner for the starting job. "I really felt the last four games we haven't been playing well offensively. We just need to make a change."

Coughlin told both players on Monday.

"Kurt is a competitor, a fighter," Coughlin said. "He is not happy, but he is a class guy."

Manning obviously was thrilled.

"He is excited about the oppor-

tunity to compete and lead," Coughlin said.

Miami interim coach Jim Bates, who took over when Dave Wannstedt resigned as the Dolphins' head coach, said Feeley would open against Seattle on Sunday.

Wannstedt drew criticism for his loyalty to the older, more experienced Fiedler. Excluding two games early this season, Fiedler has been the No. 1 quarterback since 2000.

"It's time for A.J. to get an opportunity and see what he can do," Bates said. "He's ready to

play for us, and ready to play well."

Regarding the perception that his relationship with Wannstedt became strained, Feeley said, "I'm indifferent on it. That's in the past. I'm moving forward. I'm not worried about what happened the first 10 weeks."

Acquired in March for a second-round draft pick, Feeley replaced Fiedler midway through the season opener, started the second and third games, then returned to the bench. He has thrown six interceptions, with three returned for scores, and

just two of his 114 passes have gone for touchdowns.

Fewer mistakes should come with more experience, he said.

"It's a matter of taking the easy ones and taking your shots when they come," he said. "A lot of it is playing and getting the rhythm of the game."

With the Dolphins facing numerous offensive decisions, playing Feeley provides a chance to gauge his potential. Asked if he'll remain No. 1 the rest of the season, Bates said, "We plan on A.J. playing well and playing well throughout."

Fiedler, who led the Dolphins to their lone victory, goes to the bench with a record of 37-24 as a starter.

"Obviously I'm upset," he said. "I want to be out there. I want to be playing. But it's a decision I've got to accept, and I'll be ready to go."

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As he did with Cowboys, Smith ruins Giants' day

The Associated Press

TEMPE, Ariz. — It was just like old times for Emmitt Smith.

Just as he did for years with Dallas, Smith made life miserable for the New York Giants, who aided greatly in their own demise.

Smith rushed for two touchdowns and surpassed 18,000 career rushing yards in helping Arizona beat the Giants 17-14 on Sunday.

Smith rushed for 67 yards on 19 carries, including 30 yards on Arizona's go-ahead TD drive. He had scoring runs of 2 and 3 yards.

It was the first game in two seasons in which Smith ran for two touchdowns.

Arizona (4-5) won its second straight, improved to 3-1 at home and is just a game back in the weak NFC West.

After opening 4-1, the Giants are 5-4. Tiki Barber rushed for 108 yards on 21 carries, but had only 28 yards on nine attempts in the second half. New York was penalized 10 times for 97 yards, including infractions that played big roles in Arizona's three scores.

Bertrand Berry got four of the six sacks of Kurt Warner.

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New York's Brent Alexander (26) hangs on as Arizona running back Emmitt Smith looks for yardage during the fourth quarter on Sunday.

Bengals 17, Redskins 10: At Landover, Md., second-year quarterback Carson Palmer, displaying the smooth efficiency lacked by Redskins veteran Mark Brunell, completed 24 of 39 passes for 217 yards against the NFL's top-ranked defense.

Rudi Johnson added 102 yards on 31 carries for the Bengals (4-5), who have won three of four. They also broke a six-game road losing streak.

Palmer, who day was marred by two interceptions, has completed 45 of 71 passes for 429 yards over his last three games.

The Redskins (3-6) hit a new low in Joe Gibbs' comeback year, with fans booing from the opening possession. The Hall of Fame coach even had to relent to the fans' chants and end his steadfast loyalty to Brunell, whose sea-

son-long struggles prompted Gibbs to put backup Patrick Ramsey in the game to thunderous cheers in the second quarter.

Brunell left the game 1-for-8 for 6 yards and an interception.

Panthers 37, 49ers 27: At San Francisco, Muhsin Muhammad caught three touchdown passes from Jake Delhomme in the second half, and punter Todd Sauerbrun made the go-ahead field goal with 4:25 left.

Delhomme was 19-of-34 for 303 yards — including 123 on 35 completions to Muhammad — as the Panthers (2-7) overwhelmed the Niners' terrible defense with 34 points after halftime. The beleaguered defending NFC champions had no running game and no kicker, thanks to John Kasay's calf injury, but still snapped a six-game losing streak.

Letfwich expected to miss another week

The Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Jacksonville Jaguars coach Jack Del Rio expects to be without quarterback Byron Letfwich one more game.

Letfwich returned to Birmingham, Ala., on Monday to be re-evaluated by renowned orthopedist Dr. James Andrews in hopes of playing Sunday against Tennessee.

"He's trying like crazy to get cleared for the game," Del Rio said Monday. "I still believe it's most likely that he'll be back next week (at Minnesota), but he's trying like crazy to get back for this week. We'll see how it goes."

Del Rio said he will know more Wednesday about Letfwich's availability.

Letfwich sprained a ligament in his left knee Oct. 31 against Houston and sat out Sunday's 23-17 overtime victory against Detroit, leaving David Garrard to make his second career start.

Letfwich spent last week wearing a knee brace and getting around on crutches, while doctors told him to stay off his feet as much as possible. By the end of the week he had shown signs of improvement, though, including needing only one crutch instead of two.

"It's pretty simple: when he's able to come back, then we'll have him back," Del Rio said.

If Letfwich doesn't play, Garrard will make his second consecutive start. He threw two touchdown passes and had 42 yards rushing against Detroit. He also had a key downfield block on Jacksonville's first play that was snapped in Pittsburgh for a 42-yard gain and set up a touchdown.

NFL Briefs

Garrard completed 19 of 36 passes for 198 yards and ended the game with a 36-yard TD strike to Jimmy Smith in overtime. He was sacked three times, but didn't have a turnover.

Moss likely out again

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minn. — Randy Moss, who hasn't caught a pass in a month, will probably miss at least one more game for the Minnesota Vikings because of a strained right hamstring.

Coach Mike Tice said Monday that Moss is progressing well, but won't be allowed to play again until he completes a week of practice. The Vikings (5-4) have lost three straight, although Daunte Culpepper passed for 345 yards without Moss in a 34-31 defeat at Green Bay.

Tice said he doubted Moss would be ready to play this Sunday against Detroit, but a return for the Nov. 28 game against Jacksonville is "more than likely."

Delhomme breaks thumb

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Quarterback Jake Delhomme has a broken bone in his right thumb, but he's not expected to miss any playing time, according to Carolina Panthers coach John Fox.

"It's not in the big bones, it's in the tip of the thumb," Fox said. "If he wasn't a quarterback, we wouldn't even be talking about it, because guys play with those."

Titans' Williams out for year

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee

see strong safety Tank Williams will miss the rest of the season after an MRI exam Monday confirmed he had torn left knee ligaments. Tackle Brad Hopkins will miss at least one game and possibly three with broken bones in his right hand.

These latest injuries mean the Titans (3-6), who already had lost four players for the season, now will have 10 starters who have missed at least one start.

"It's been part for the course this year," coach Jeff Fisher said.

Bears' Urlacher hurt

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — Pro Bowl linebacker Brian Urlacher will miss 4-6 weeks because of a lower left leg injury.

Urlacher, out for the entire pre-season and two regular-season games with a hamstring problem, had a surgical procedure performed Monday on his leg, coach Louie Smith said. There was some internal bleeding.

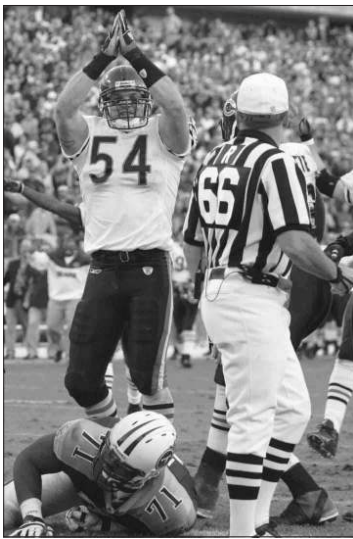
Smith said Urlacher would not be put on injured reserve.

Ravens lose punter

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — Baltimore's comeback victory over the New York Jets came at a price: The Ravens lost punter Dave Zastudil for 3-4 weeks with a separated shoulder.

Zastudil hurt his left shoulder while being blocked after a second-quarter kick. He was replaced by backup quarterback Kevell Stewart, who made initial practice punt missed the net and traveled 45 yards over the Baltimore bench.

Stewart then made his debut with the Ravens by averaging a respectable 35.4 yards on five punts, dropping two inside the 20.



Chicago Bears linebacker Brian Urlacher (54) signals for a safety that gave Chicago a 19-17 victory in overtime over the Tennessee Titans on Sunday. Urlacher is expected to miss 4-6 weeks after doctors performed a surgical procedure on his lower left leg on Monday.

Top four teams share coaching and intangibles

By Dave Goldberg

The Associated Press

During their record 21-game winning streak, the New England Patriots won only once by more than 14 points. Since the streak was snapped in Pittsburgh two weeks ago, they have won by 18 and 23, despite a run of injuries that, among other things, has taken away their top three cornerbacks.

That says a lot about the suble, which may have lifted the subtle burden of the streak. Since it ended, the Patriots have been able to concentrate on the real business of winning their third NFL title in four seasons.

A week into the second half of the schedule, it's easy to identify the four top teams: New England, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and now Atlanta, three teams with one loss and the Falcons with two.

What typifies them are the little things they do. Such as:

■ Hines Ward, one of the game's best wide receivers, throwing his body into opponents to clear the way for Pittsburgh teammates. And Plaxico Burress, once thought of as a classic "Me First" athlete, following Ward's lead and doing the same.

Commentary

■ Troy Brown, in his 12th season as a Patriot, playing cornerback in a pinch and getting an interception. Plus defensive players Edward Seymour, Mike Vrabel and Dan Klecko playing a little offense.

■ Atlanta's resilience, rebounding from a 56-10 embarrassment in Kansas City to win in difficult Denver. And on Sunday, coming back after what appeared to be a bogus call robbed them of a touchdown to score four plays later and clinch a victory over Tampa Bay.

"What this team has learned to do is play down to down. When something negative happens, we go back to the huddle and put it behind us," said Jim Myers, who in his rookie year as a head coach has found a way to instill the team ethos that has worked so well for Bill Belichick, Bill Cowher and Andy Reid.

Indeed, coaching seems to be a common denominator among top four teams.

Belichick has won two Super Bowls and has a shot at a third with a team of parts that mesh, whether they are first-round

draft picks such as Seymour and Willie McGinest, sixth-rounders like Tedy Bruschi, sixth-rounders such as Tom Brady or rejected veterans Corey Dillon and Rodney Harrison. The only high pick on the offensive line is left tackle John Taylor, taken in the second round. First, starters were street free agents.

Andy Reid has done the same in Philadelphia.

Among the reasons Terrell Owens wanted out of San Francisco was the front office's perceived lack of commitment to winning. Winning is why he wanted to go to Philly — his sideline rant at Donovan McNabb during the team's lone loss in Pittsburgh seemed less about anger and more about frustration. And if Owens ever does start yelling "throw me the ball," he assured Reid will privately tell his star receiver to shut up.

Belichick's players seem like like New England's. If the Patriots reflect Belichick's intellect — every week features new gimmicks and new defenses — the Steelers reflect Cowher's toughness.

The similarity extends to the quarterbacks.

Yes, Ben Roethlisberger was a

high first-rounder and Brady a sixth-round. But in seven starts (all of them victories) Roethlisberger hasn't looked at numbers, only victories. He's developed a rapport with the hitherto inconsistent Burress and his toughness reflects not only his coach but also veterans Ward and Jerome Bettis.

Bettis, at 32, is 5 yards away from becoming the NFL's No. 5 career rusher, but still the last two games, when he has filled in for the injured Duane Staley, he was used almost exclusively in short-yardage situations. He did the same last season, a dismal 6-10 campaign, when Cowher told him in training camp that he would be only a part-timer.

No problem, at least in public. "That's my job," he said Sunday after Pittsburgh beat Cleveland 24-10, avoiding a letdown after consecutive victories over the Patriots and Eagles. "What I'm here for is to be a relief pitcher. This team is special because the guys behind the starters have to help."

There is a fifth team worth consideration for elite status: the Indianapolis Colts.

If Indy was built in the image of its coach, Tony Dungy, it would have a defense. But the offensive

stars, especially Peyton Manning, command a salary that assures the defenders have to be draft finds or guys from the scrap heap, a hard way to build a strong unit. In their last four games, for example, the Colts have scored 139 points, an average of almost 35, but have lost twice.

Still, it's hard to write off a team that seems able to score every time it gets the ball. Manning now has 31 touchdown passes, 17 short of Dan Marino's season record with seven games left.

One good sign for the Colts: In their last two games, home victories over Minnesota and Houston, the defense has allowed 594 yards, just four more than it allowed against Kansas City on Oct. 31. The Colts got a big game Sunday from Robert Mathis, an under-sized second-year defensive end who had three sacks against Houston, and is capable of taking the double-team pressure off their one established star, Dwight Freeney.

The Colts, however, remain an outsider because of the defense. Playoffs, sure. Super Bowl, unlikely.

Look to the teams with the strong intangibles rather than the stars to be in Jacksonville in February.

Pats give all-around effort

WR Brown fills in at CB, intercepts Bledsoe in win vs. Bills

BY JIMMY GOLEN
The Associated Press

FOXBORO, Mass. — Troy Brown has had to make a lot of adjustments while playing both sides of the football.

One thing remains the same. "You always want to score when you get the ball — offense or defense," he said Sunday night after his first career interception — one of four Patriots interceptions in a 29-6 victory over the Buffalo Bills.

Brown intercepted old friend Drew Bledsoe early in the fourth quarter and ran it back 17 yards to the Buffalo 23 before he was caught from behind. Bledsoe connected with Brown for 12 touchdowns and more than 200 passes during their time together with the Patriots, but this is the first time only one of them was happy after the catch.

"That's my man, I won't disrespect him in any way," said Brown, who had the ball from his interception stowed away in his locker after the game. "I would like to see him do well. But I do not want to see him come in here and beat us."

A wide receiver helping out on defense because of injuries in the secondary, Brown caught two passes for 23 yards, the first time in franchise history that a player has had a reception and interception in the same game.

"He's awesome," quarterback Tom Brady, who was 19-for-35 for 233 yards and two touchdowns. "Whatever the coach asks him to do, he does. The interception was awesome."

Adam Vinatieri kicked five field goals, and Corey Dillon ran for 151 yards on 26 carries. Bledsoe threw three interceptions and back up J.P. Losman had one and a fumble against a dominating New England defense.

Bledsoe was just 8-for-19 for 76 yards — a quarterback rating of 14.3 in his latest return to Foxboro, where he was the starter for eight seasons before losing his job to Brady in 2001.

The Patriots (8-1) have won two straight since their NFL-best 21-game winning streak ended on Oct. 31 at Pittsburgh. They out-gained the Bills 428 yards to 125 and moved two games ahead of the New York Jets in the AFC East.

The Patriots led 20-0 at halftime, scoring on four of their five possessions, while Buffalo 0-6 punted three times and was intercepted twice. The Bills scored only on a punt return — a poor follow-up to their strong 22-17 victory over the Jets.

Even Willis McGahee, who sparked the Bills to three victories in their previous four games, couldn't do much after New England caught an early lead. McGahee ran for more than 100 yards in those victories, his only previous poor starts, but was held to 37 yards on 14 carries by the Patriots.

Without any help from the running game, Bledsoe was his usual inept self — 8-for-19 for 76 yards — against his former team, dropping



New England Patriots WR David Givens (87) reaches but can't make the reception as Buffalo Bills' Terrence McGee (24) defends Sunday night in Foxboro, Mass. The Patriots won 29-6.

to 1-5 against the Patriots.

"Not only us," said safety Lawyer Milloy, another former Patriot, "but there are 31 other teams that should be envious of the way they're playing. They have only one loss this year and everyone who plays them has to be ready."

The Patriots, still rolling after last week's 40-22 victory at St. Louis, took a 6-0 lead on field goals of 27 and 24 yards by Vinatieri. On their next series, they marched 75 yards on 11

plays, capped by Brady's 13-yard pass to David Patten.

Bledsoe threw his second interception on the next possession. It was returned 29 yards by Teddy Bruschi, and Brady threw a 3-yard touchdown pass to Christian Fauria.

Vinatieri made it 23-0 with a 20-yard field goal in the third quarter. Jonathan Smith then returned Josh Miller's punt 70 yards for a touchdown, but the 2-point conversion attempt failed for Buffalo.

Packers: Late Minnesota comeback falls short

PACKERS, FROM BACK PAGE

The Vikings were stunned by the referee's ruling.

"We thought we had the ball and I don't know what else to tell you," Minnesota coach Mike Tice said. "We thought we had the ball from the get-go. We had a player with the ball, another player on top of him."

Ferguson broke into the open at midfield and thought he had a clear shot at the end zone when Antoine Winfield swooped in and punched the ball away.

"It seemed like the game was gradually slipping out of our hands and going into their grasp," Favre said. "When we broke it right there I said, 'Oh, boy.' You would think you'd been, 'Oh, great.' But until he got on the ground I was not satisfied."

Favre and Daunte Culpepper each threw four touchdown passes without an interception. It was Favre's 18th game with four or more TD tosses, second only to Dan Marino's 21.

Favre hit receiver Jason Walker, tailback Tony Fisher, tight end Bubba Franks and fullback William Henderson in the end zone as the Packers built a 31-17 lead.

"I knew it wasn't enough," Favre said.

Not with Culpepper on the other sideline.

Even though he was working without star receiver Randy Moss (strained hamstring) for the second straight game, Culpepper threw for 363 yards, connecting with Nate Burleson 11 times for 141 yards and a score.

Culpepper's 2-yard shovel pass to Antonio Smith with 2:53 left made it 31-24. The Vikings held and got the ball back with 2:18 remaining. Culpepper needed just three plays and less than a minute to move Minnesota 58 yards to a 17-yard TD toss to Moss Williams with 1:20 left.

That's when Ferguson fumbled and Steele snatched the ball back.

"It definitely was a little extra special to get that against my old team," Steele said. "I was just in the right place at the right time."

For payback.

Sunday's NFL stars:

Quarterbacks

■ Peyton Manning, Colts, shredded Houston for 320 yards and five touchdowns, tying NFL record with his third game this season with five TD passes.

■ Vaino: Daunte Culpepper set the record early this season.

■ Ben Roethlisberger, Steelers, became the first rookie QB to begin a 7-0 start in the merger in his first 7-0 win at Cleveland.

■ David Garrard, Jaguars, had two TD passes in his second career start, including a game-winning TD to Jimmy Smith in overtime in a 23-17 victory over Detroit.

■ Daunte Culpepper, Vikings, completed 27 of 44 passes for 363 yards and four TDs, but Brett Favre, Packers, went 20-of-29 for 28 yards and four TDs as Green Bay won 34-31.

Receivers

■ Brandon Stokely, Colts, had five receptions for 132 yards, and teammate Dallas Clark caught three passes for 102 yards in a 49-14 rout of Houston.

■ The Saints' Joe Horn had five catches for 167 yards, including a decisive 42-yard TD reception, in a 27-20 victory against Kansas City.

■ Isaac Bruce, Rams, had seven catches for 104 yards, his fifth 100-yard game of the season.

■ The Falcons' Alge Crumler had a career-best 118 yards, including a key 49-yard TD catch, as Atlanta defeated Tampa Bay 24-14.

■ The Panthers' Muhsin Muhammad caught three touchdowns and had 123 yards receiving as Carolina beat San Francisco 37-27.

■ Nate Burleson, Vikings, caught 11 passes for 141 yards and a score.

Running backs

■ Emmitt Smith, Cardinals, ran for two TDs in a game for the first time in two seasons, leading Arizona past the Giants 17-14.

■ Derrick Byrd, Colts, rubbing for injured Priest Holmes, ran for 138 yards and a touchdown in New Orleans.

■ Shaun Alexander, Seahawks, had 176 yards, going over 1,000 yards for fourth straight season, but Seattle lost at St. Louis 23-12.

■ Adrian Peterson, Vikings, had a season-best 139 yards on 18 carries.

■ Adrian Green, Packers, rushed for 165 yards on 21 carries in a 34-31 win over Minnesota.

■ Fred Taylor, Jaguars, had a season-high 144 yards rushing despite missing most of third quarter with leg cramps in a 23-17 OT win against the Dolphins.

■ Deuce McAllister, Saints, rushed for 127 yards and a touchdown on 16 carries against Kansas City.

■ Curtis Martin, Jets, scored twice in the first half and finished with 119 yards on 28 carries against Baltimore.

■ Tiki Barber, Giants, had 108 yards on 21 carries, but only 28 yards in the second half in a 17-14 loss to Arizona.

AP photos

SPORTS



Despite O'Neal's dismal performance at line, Heat put away Bucks in 20T, Page 34



The Green Bay Packers' Robert Ferguson (89) looks at the ball after fumbling in the final minutes of their game against the Minnesota Vikings on Sunday in Green Bay, Wis. Ferguson returned the kickoff to midfield, where Antoine Winfield forced a fumble. The officials ruled that Packers tight end Ben Steele, front left, recovered, even though Minnesota's Larry Ned emerged with the ball. The Packers went on to a 34-31 victory.

Packers make key pickup

Fumble recovery by Vikings castoff sets up winning FG

BY ARNIE STAPLETON
The Associated Press

GREEN BAY, Wis. — Ben Steele repaid both the team that believed in him and the one that gave up on him.

The tight end, snatched up by Green Bay when he was cut by Minnesota during training camp, recovered a fumble that led to Ryan Longwell's 33-yard field goal as time expired, giving the Packers a 34-31 victory Sunday over their bitter rival.

"We stole Steele from them, and he stole the ball from them," Packers guard Marco Rivera said.

Minnesota's Derek Ross certainly felt robbed.

He pounced on the ball when Green Bay's Robert Ferguson fumbled on a kickoff return at midfield with 1:20 left after the Vikings had scored two touchdowns in a 93-second span to tie it. But Steele, who outweighs Ross by more than 50 pounds, fought his

way into the scrum and clutched the ball, too.

The officials eventually ruled Green Bay had possession, and Brett Favre led the Packers on the winning drive for their fourth straight victory. The Vikings lost their third straight game and fell into a tie with the Packers atop the NFC North at 5-4.

"There wasn't any doubt in my mind I had the ball," Steele said. "I wasn't going to give it up until the ref said, '[No.] 82, you've got it.' There was a lot of scratching and clawing. It seemed like an eternity, but there was no way I was going to let go of that sucker."

Ross said he was robbed by referee Ron Winter, plain and simple.

"Clearly, I had the ball. Yeah, we had the ball," Ross said. "I don't think the referee did a good job of getting everybody off the pile to see clearly I had the ball."

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Packers quarterback Brett Favre celebrates after a 17-yard touchdown pass to Bubba Franks in the second quarter of Sunday's game.

More coverage inside:



■ Giants, Dolphins will try to revive struggling offenses by switching quarterbacks, Page 37

■ Jacksonville QB Leftwich expected to be out another week; Bears LB Urlacher out four to six weeks after leg injury, Page 38

■ WR Brown becomes first Patriot to record reception, interception in same game in victory over Bledsoe, Bills, Page 39

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BCS computers continue to give Oklahoma slim lead over Auburn for No. 2 ranking

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NASCAR says Nextel Cup will keep new playoff format for 2005

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Bonds becomes oldest MVP, wins award for record seventh time

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